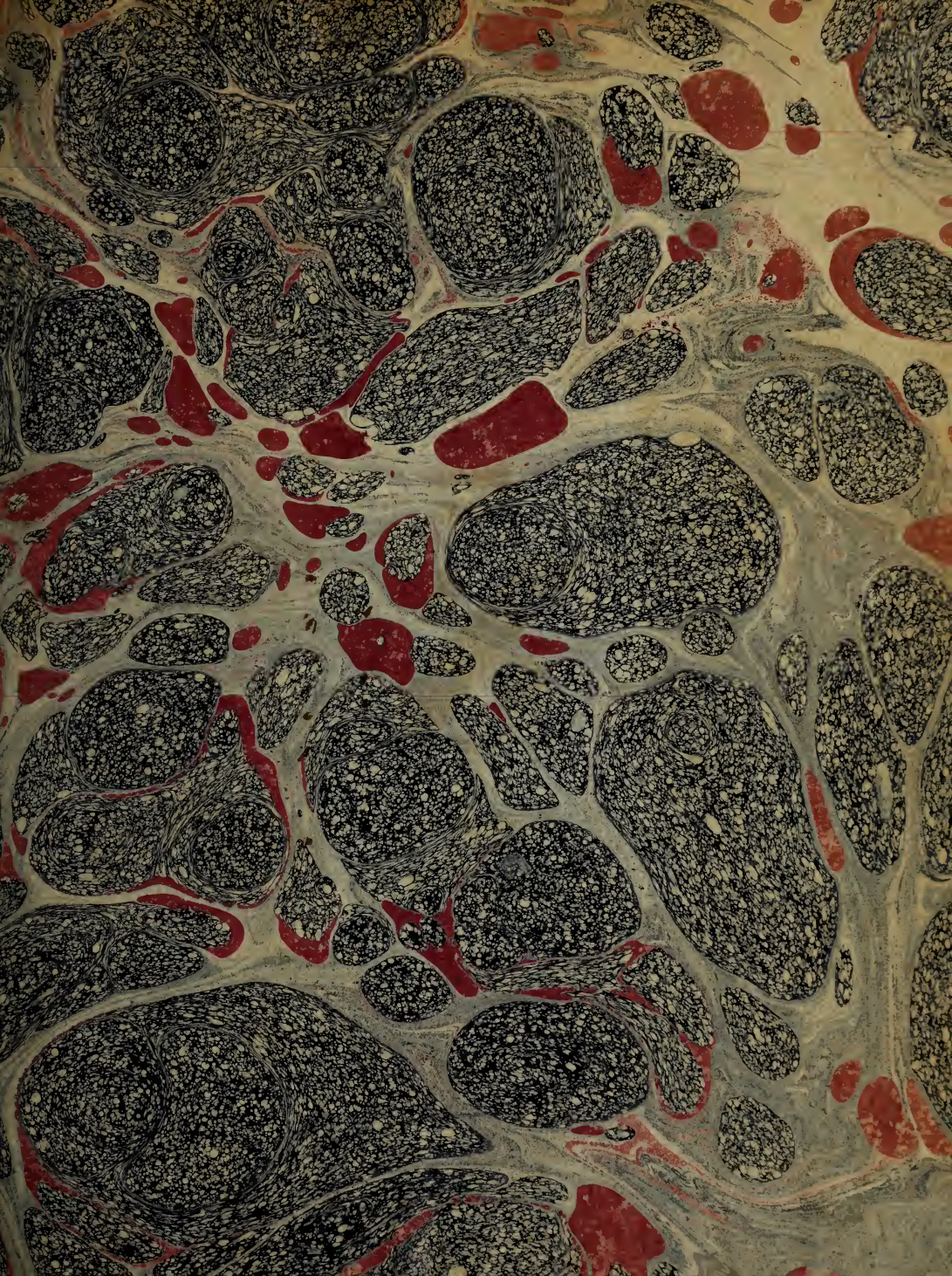




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THE
LOVE OF KING
DAVID AND FAIR
BETHSABE.

With the Tragedie of Absalon.

As it hath ben diuers times plaid on the stage.

Written by George Peele.



LONDON,
Printed by Adam Islip.

1599.

149,540.

May, 1873.

Dramatis Personæ

King David

King Hahan

King Machaas

Absalon

Ammon

Anunia

Salomon

Chileab

} Davids sons

Joab Captain of the host to David

Amasa Captain of the host to Absalon

Urias Husband to Bathfabe

Nathan a Prophet.

Abiathar High Priest

Jonathar his Son

Sadoc a Priest

Ahimneas his Son

Cusay

Ithay

} friends to David

Achitophel, friend to Absalon

Jonadab friend to Ammon

Abisai Nephew to David

Semei Davids Enemy

Jethru Servant to Ammon

Bethfabe Wife to Urias

Thannar Davids Daughter

Widow of Thecoa

Handmaid to Bethfabe


Davids Concubines

Souldiers Servants &c -



The loue of *Dauid* and faire *Bersabe*,
with the Tragedie of *Absolon*.

Prologus.

 I Israels sweetest singer now I sing,
His holy stile and happie victories,
Whose Muse was dipt in that inspiring dew,
Arch-angels stilled from the breath of Ioue,
Decking her temples with the glorious flowers,
Heauens raine on tops of Syon and Mount Synai,
Vpon the bosome of his yuorie Lute,
The Cherubins and Angels laid their breasts,
And when his consecrated fingers strooke
The golden wiers of his rauishing harpe,
He gaue alarum to the host of heauen,
That wing'd with lightning, brake the clouds and cast
Their christall armor, at his conquering feet.
Of this sweet Poet Ioues Musition,
And of bis beauteous sonne I prease to sing.
Then helpe deuine Adonay to conduct,
Vpon the wings of my well tempered verse,
The hearers minds about the towers of Heauen,
And guide them so in this thrice haughty flight,
Their mounting feathers scorch not with the fire,
That none can temper but thy holy hand:
To thee for succour flies my feeble muse,
And at thy feet her yron Pen doth vse.

David and Bethsabe.

*He drawes a curtaine, and discovers Bethsabe with her maid
bathing euer a spring: she sings, and David
sits above viewing her.*

The Song.



Ot sunne, coole fire, temperd with sweet aire,
Black shade, fair nurse, shadow my white haire
Shine sun, burne fire, breath aire, and ease mee,
Black shade, fair nurse, shroud me and please me
Shadow (my sweet nurse) keep me from burning
Make not my glad cause, cause of mourning.
Let not my beauties fire,
Enflame vnstaied desire,
Nor pierce any bright eye,
That wandreth lightly.

Bethsabe. Come gentle Zephire trickt with those perfumes
That erst in Eden sweetned Adams loue,
And stroke my bosome with the silken fan:
This shade (sun prooffe) is yet no prooffe for thee,
Thy body smoother then this wauelesse spring,
And puter then the substance of the same,
Can creepe through that his launces cannot pierce,
Thou and thy sister soft and sacred aire,
Goddesse of life, and gouernesse of health,
Keepes euery fountaine fresh and arbor sweet,
No brasen gate, her passage can repulse,
Nor bushly thicket, bar thy suble breath,
Then decke thee with thy loose delightfome robes,
And on thy wings bring delicate perfumes,
To play the wantons with vs through the leaues,
Da. What tunes, what words, what looks, what wonders pierce
My soule, incensed with a suddain fire,
What tree, what shade, what spring, what paradise
Enioyes the beantie of so faire a dame?
Faite Eua plac'd in perfect happinesse,

David and Bethsabe.

Lending her praise-notes to the liberall heavens,
Strooke with the accents of Arch-angels tunes,
Wrought not more pleasure to her husbands thoughts,
Then this faire womans words and notes to mine.

May that sweet plaine that beates her pleasant weighe
Be still enameld with discoloured flowers,

That precious fount, beare sand of purest gold,

And for the Peble, let the siluer streames

That pierce earths bowels to mainteine the force,

Play vpon Rubies, Saphires, Chrisolites,

The brims let be imbrac'd with golden curles

Of mosse that sleepest with sound the waters make,

For ioy to feed the fount with their recourse,

Let all the grasse that beautifies her bower,

Beare Manna euery morne in steed of dew,

Or let the dew be sweeter far then that

That hangs like chaines of pearle on Hermon hill,

Or balme which trickled from old Arons beard.

Cusay, come vp and serue thy lord the King. *Enter Cusay.*

Cus. What seruice doth my lord the King command?

David. See Cusay see, the flower of Israel,

The fairest daughter that obeies the King,

In all the land the lord subdued to me.

Fairer then Isacs louer at the well,

Brighter then inside barke of new hewen Cedar,

Sweeter then flames of fine perfumed myrthe.

And comelier then the siluer clouds that dance

On Zephires wings before the king of heauen.

Cus. Is it not Bethsabe the Hethites wife

Vrias, now at Rabath siege with Ioab?

Dauid. Goe know, and bring her quickly to the King,

Tell her, her graces hath found grace with him.

Cusay. I will my lord. *Exit Cusay to Bethsabe.*

David. Bright Bethsabe shall wash in Dauids bower,

In water mix'd with purest Almond flower,

And bath her beautie in the milke of kids,

Dauid and Berſabe.

Bright Bethſabe giues earth to my deſires,
Verdure to earth, and to that verdure flowers,
To flowers, ſweet Odors, and to Odors wings,
That carrie pleaſures to the hearts of Kings.

Cuſay to Bethſabe, ſhe ſtaring as ſomething a fright.

Cuſay. Faire Bethſabe, the King of Iſraell
From forth his Princely tower hath teen thee bath,
And thy ſweet graces haue found grace with him,
Come then and kneele vnto him where he ſtands,
The King is gracious, and hath liberall hands.

Beth. Ah what is Bethſabe to pleaſe the King,
Or what is Dauid, that he ſhould deſire
For fickle beauties ſake his ſeruants wife ?

Cuſay. Dauid (thou knoweſt faire dame) is wiſe and juſt,
Elected to the heart of Iſraels God,
Then doe not thou expoſtulate with him
For any action that contents his ſoule.

Beth. My lord the King, elect to Gods owne heart,
Should not his gracious ielouſie incenſe,
Whoſe thoughts are chaſt, I hate incontinence.

Cuſay. Woman thou wrongſt the King, & doubtſt his ho-
Whoſe truth mainteines the crowne of Iſrael, (nour,
Making him ſtay, that bad me bring thee ſtrait.

Beth. The Kings poore handmaid will obey my lord,

Cuſ. Then come and doe thy dutie to his grace,
And doe what ſeemeth fauour in his ſight.

Exeunt.

Dauid. Now comes my louer ripping like the Roc,
And brings my longings tangled in her haire,
To ioy her loue Ile build a kingly bower,
Seated in hearing of a hundred ſtreames,
That for their homage to her ſouereine ioies,
Shall as the ſerpents fold into their neſts, &
In oblique turnings wind the nimble waues,
About the circles of her curious walks,

And

David and Bethsabe.

And with their murmure summon easfull sleepe,
To lay his golden scepter on her browes,
Open the dores, and enterteine my loue,
Open I say, and as you open sing,
Welcome faire Bethsabe King Davids darling.

Enter Cusay with Bethsabe.

David. Welcome faire Bethsabe King Davids darling,
Thy bones faire couering, erst discouered faire,
And all mine eyes with all thy beuties pierst,
As heauens bright eye burnes most when most he cimes
The crooked Zodiake with his fierie sphere,
And shineth furthest from this earthly globe:
So since thy beutie scorcht my conquerd soule,
I cald thee neerer for my neerer cure.

Bethsa. Too neere my lord was your vnarmed heart,
When furthest off my haplesse beutie pierc'd,
And would this dreerie day had turnd to night,
Or that some pitchie cloud had clok'd the Sun,
Before their lights had caus'd my lord to see
His name disparag'd, and my chastitie.

David. My loue, if want of loue haue left thy soule,
A sharper sence of Honor then thy King,
(For loue leads Princes sometimes from their seats,)
As erst my heart was hurt, displeasing thee,
So come and tast thy ease, with easing me.

Beth. One medicine cannot heale our different harmes,
But rather make both ranckle at the bone,
Then let the King be cunning in his cure,
Least flattering both, both perish in his hand.

David. Leauie it to me my deereft Bethsabe,
Whose skill is conuersant in deeper cures,
And Cusay hast thou to my seruant Ioab,
Commanding him to send Vrias home
With all the speed can possibly be vsed.

Cusay. Cusay will flie about the Kings desire.

Exeunt.

Enter

David and Bethsabe.

Enter Ioab, Abisay, Vrias, and others, with drum and ensigne.

Ioab. Courage ye mightie men of Israel,
And charge your fatall instruments of war
Vpon the bosomes of proud Ammons sonnes,
That haue disguisd your Kings Embassadors,
Cut halfe their beards, and halfe their garments off,
In spight of Israel, and his daughters sonnes,
Ye fight the holy battels of Iehoua,
King Dauids God, and ours and Iacobs God
That guides your weapons to their conquering strokes,
Orders your footsteps, and directs your thoughts
To stratagemes that harbor victorie:
He cast his sacred eiesight from on high,
And sees your foes run seeking for their deaths,
Laughing their labours and their hopes to scorne,
While twixt your bodies, and their blunted swords,
He puts on armor of his honors prooffe,
And makes their weapons wound the sencelesse winds.

Abis. Before this citie Rabath we will lie,
And shoot forth shafts as thicke and dangerous
As was the haile that Moises mixt with fire,
And threw with furie round about the fields
Deuouring Pharoes friends, and Egypts fruits.

Vrias. First mighty captaines, Ioab and Abisay,
Let vs assault and scale this kingly Tower,
Where all their conduits and their fountaines are,
Then we may easily take the citie too.

Ioab. Well hath Vrias counfeld our attempts,
And as he spake vs, so assault the Tower,
Let Hanon now the king of Ammons sonne,
Repulse our conquering passage if he dare.

Hanon with King Machaas and others, vpon the wals.

Hanon. What would the shepheards dogs of Israel
Snatch from the mighty issue of King Ammon,
The valiant Amonites, and haughty Syrians?

Dauid and Bethsabe.

Tis not your late successiue victories,
Can make vs yeeld, or quail our courages,
But if ye dare assay to scale this Tower,
Our angrie swords shall smite ye to the ground,
And venge our losses on your hatefull liues.

Ioab. Hanon, thy fathet Nahas gaue releefe
To holy Dauid in his haplesse exile,
Liued his fixed date, and died in peace:
But thou in steed of reaping his reward,
Hast trod it vnderfoot, and scornd our King,
Therefore thy daies shall end with violence,
And to our swords thy vitall bloud shall cleaue.

Mach. Hence thou that bearest poor Israels shepherds hook,
The prouwd lieutenant of that base borne King,
And kep within the compasse of his fold,
For if ye seeke to feed on Ammons fruits,
And stray into the Syrians fruitfull Medes,
The mastiues of our land, shall werry ye,
And pull the weefels from your greedy throtes.

Abis. Who can indure these Pagans blasphemios,

Vrias. My soule repines at this disparagement.

Ioab. Assault ye valiant men of Dauids host,
And beat these railing dastards from their dores.

Assault, and they win the Tower, and Ioab speakes aboue.

Thus haue we won the Tower, which we will keepe,
Maugre the sonnes of Ammon, and of Syria.

Enter Cusay beneath.

Cus. Where is lord Ioab leader of the host?

Ioab. Here is lord Ioab, leader of the host.

Cusay come vp, for we haue won the hold. *He comes.*

Cusay. In happie hower then is Cusay come.

Ioab. What news then brings lord Cusay from the king.

Cusay. His maiestie commands thee out of hand.

To send him home Vrias from the wars,
For matter of some seruice he should doe,

Vrias,

David and Bersabe.

Vrias, Tis for no choler hath surpris'd the King,
(I hope lord Cusay) gainst his seruants truth.

Cusay. No rather to prefer *Vrias* truth.

Ioab. Here take him with thee then, and goe in peace,
And tell my lord the King that I haue fought
Against the citie Rabath with successe,
And skaled where the royall pallace is,
The conduit heads and all their sweetest springs,
Then let him come in person to these wals,
With all the souldiers he can bring besides,
And take the city as his owne exploit,
Least I surprise it, and the people giue
The glory of the conquest to my name.

Cus. We will Lord *Ioab*, and great Israels God
Blesse in thy hands the battels of our King.

Ioab. Earewell *Vrias*, hast away the King.

Vrias. As sure as *Ioab* breaths a victor here,
Vrias will hast him, and his owne returne. *Exeunt.*

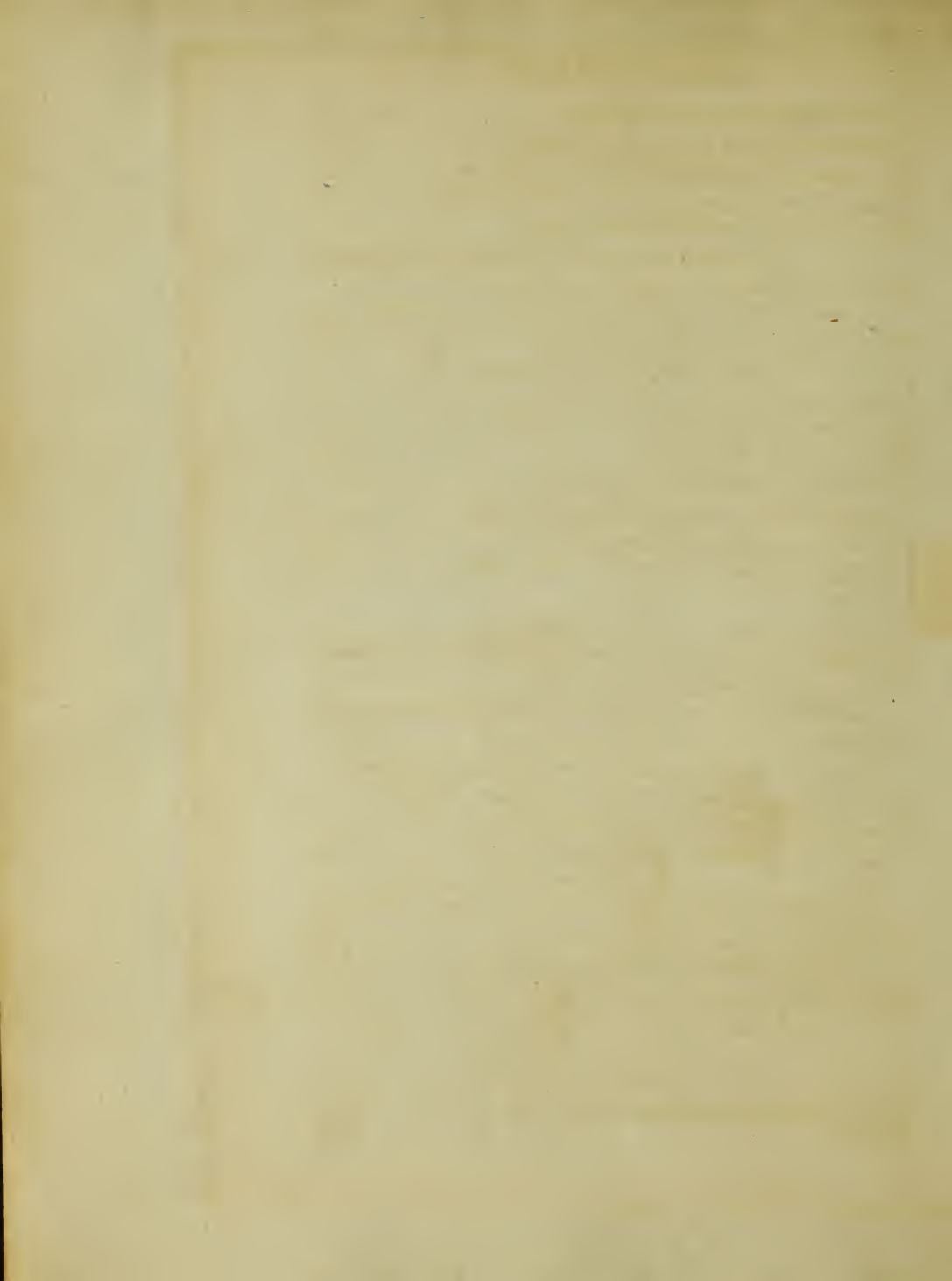
Abisa. Let vs descend, and ope the pallace gate,
Taking our souldiors in to keepe the hold.

Ioab. Let vs *Abisay*, and ye sonnes of Iuda,
Be valiant, and mainteine your victory. *Exeunt.*

Ammon, Ionadab, Iethray, and Ammons; page.

Ionad. What meanes my lord, the Kings beloued son,
That weares vpon his right triumphant arme,
The power of Israel for a royall fauor,
That holds vpon the Tables of his hands,
Banquets of honor, and all thoughts content
To suffer pale and grisely abstinence
To sit and feed vpon his fainting cheekes,
And sucke away the bloud that cheeres his lookes.

Ammo. Ah *Ionadab* it is my sisters lookes,
On whose sweet beutie I bestow my bloud,
That makes me looke so amorously leane,
Her beautie hauing seafd vpon my heart,



David and Berſabe.

So merrily conſecrate to her content,
Sets now ſuch guard about his vitall bloud,
And views the paſſage with ſuch piercing eyes,
That none can ſcape to cheare my pining cheekes,
But all is thought too little for her loue.

Iona. Then from her heart thy lookes ſhall be releued,
And thou ſhalt ioy her as thy ſoule deſires.

Ammon. How can it be my ſweet friend Ionadab,
Since Thamar is a virgine and my ſiſter?

Iona. Thus it ſhall be, lie downe vpon thy bed,
Faining thee feuer ſicke, and ill at eaſe,
And when the king ſhall come to viſit thee,
Deſire thy ſiſter Thamar may be ſent
To dreſſe ſome deinties for thy maladie:
Then when thou haſt her ſolely with thy ſelfe,
Enforce ſome fauour to thy manly loue :
See where ſhe comes, intreat her in with thee.

Enter Thamar.

Thamar. What aileth Ammon with ſuch ſickly lookes,
To daunt the fauour of his lovely face ?

Am. Sweet Thamar ſick, & wiſh ſome wholeſome cates
Dreſt with the cunning of thy daintie hands.

Tham. That hath the King commanded at my hands
Then come and reſt thee, while I make thee readie
Some dainties, eaſefull to thy cras'd ſoule.

Am. I goe ſweet ſiſter, eaſed with thy ſight.

Exeunt. Reſtet Ionadab.

Ion. Why ſhould a Prince, whoſe power may command,
Obey the rebell paſſions of his loue,
When they contend but gainſt his conſcience,
And may be gouern'd or ſuppreſt by will.
Now Ammon loſe thoſe louing knot's of bloud,
That ſokte the courage from thy kingly heart,
And giue it paſſage to thy withered cheekes :
Now Thamar ripened are the holy fruits

C

That

David and Beth ſabe.

That grew on plants of thy virginities,
And rotten is thy name in Iſrael,
Poore Thamar, little did thy lovely hands
Foretell an action of ſuch violence,
As to contend with Ammons luſty armes,
Sinnewd with vigor of his kindleſſe loue,
Faire Thamar now diſhonour hunts thy foot,
And followes thee through euery couert ſhade,
Diſcouering thy ſhame and nakedneſſe
Euen from the valey of Iehoſophas,
Vp to the loſtie mounts of Libanon,
Where Cædars ſturd with anger of the winds,
Sounding in ſtormes the tale of thy diſgrace,
Tremble with furie, and with murmure ſhake
Eearth with their feet, and with their heads the heauens,
Beating the clouds into their ſwifteſt rackets,
To beare this wonder round about the world.

Ammon thruſting out Thamar.

Am. Hence from my bed, whoſe ſight offends my ſoule
As doth the parbreake of diſgorged beares.

Tham. Vnkind, vnprinccely, and vomanly Ammon,

To force, and then reſuſe thy ſiſters loue:

Adding vnto the fright of thy offence,

The banefull torment of my publiſht ſhame,

O doe not this diſhonor to thy loue,

Nor clog thy ſoule with ſuch increaſing ſiane,

This ſecond euill far exceeds the firſt.

Am. Iethray come thruſt this woman from my ſight,

And bolt the dore vpon her if ſhe ſtriuē.

Iethray. Go madame goe, away you muſt be gone,

My lord hath done with you, I pray depart. *He thruſts her out.*

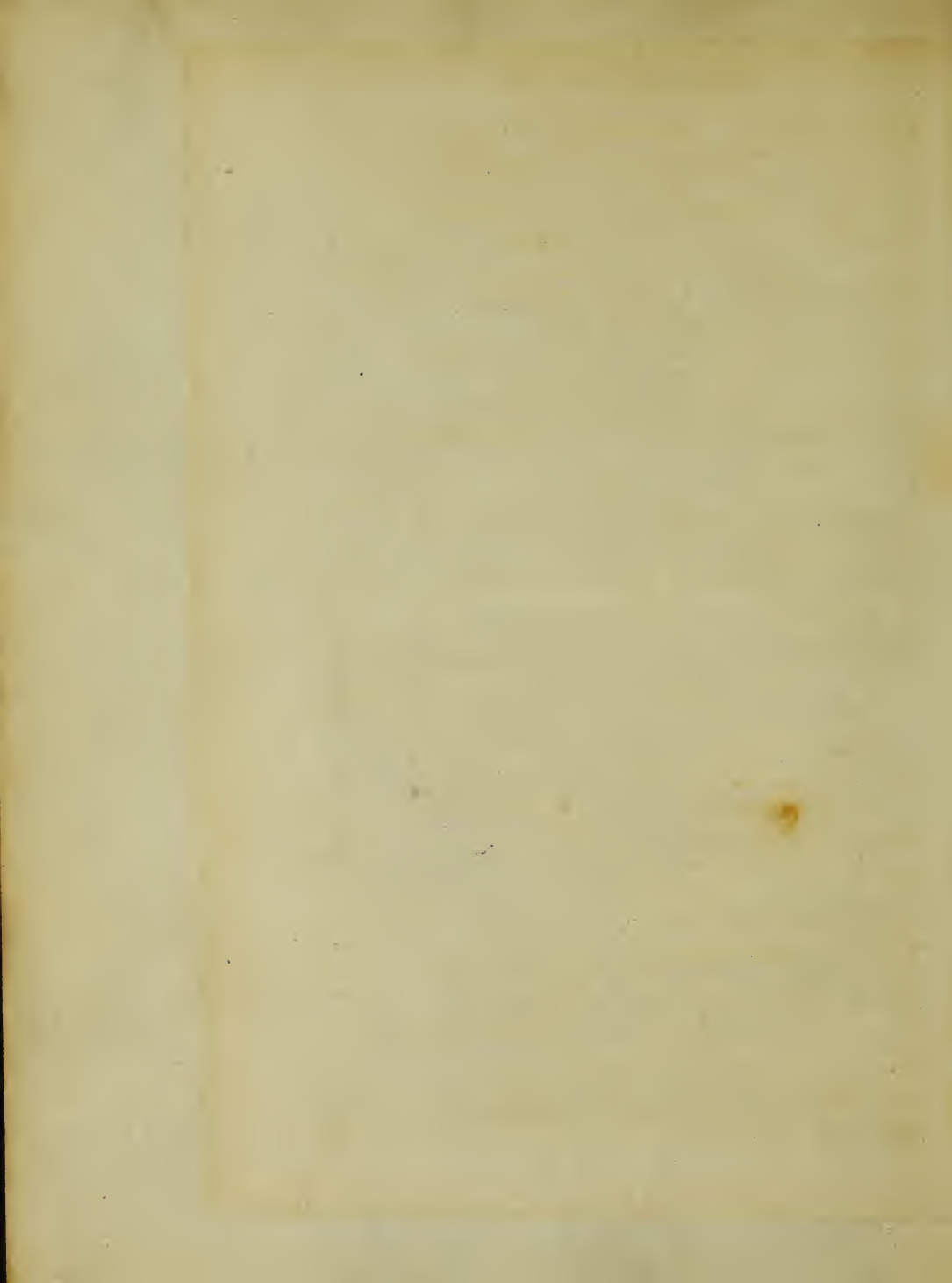
Tham. Whether alaſſe, ah whether ſhall I flie

With folded armes, and all amaſed ſoule,

Caſt as was Eua from that glorious ſoile

(Where al delights ſat bating wings with thoughts,

Ready



Dauid and Bethsabe.

Ready to nestle in her naked breasts)
To bare and barraine vales with floods made wast,
To desert woods, and hils with lighening scorcht,
With death, with shame, with hell, with horreur sit,
There will I wander from my fathers face,
There Absolon, my brother Absolon,
Sweet Absolon shall heare his sister mourne,
There will I liue with my windie sighs,
Night Rauens and Owles to rend my bloudie side,
Which with a rustie weapon I will wound,
And makee them passage to my panting heart:
Why talkst thou wretch, and leaust the deed vndone.

Enter Absolon.

Rend haire and garments as thy heart is rent,
With inward surie of a thousand greefes,
And scatter them by these unhallowed dores,
To figure Ammons resting crueltie,
And Tragicke spoile of Thamar chastitie.

Abf. What causeth Thamar to exclaime so much?

Tham. The cause that Thamar shameth to disclose.

Abfa. Say, I thy brother will reuenge that cause.

Tham. Ammon our fathers son hath forced me,

And thrusts me from him as the scorne of Israel.

Abf. Hath Ammon forced thee by Dauids hand,

And by the couenant God hath made with him,

Ammon shall beare his violence to hell,

Traitor to Heauen, traitor to Dauids throne,

Traitor to Absolon and Israel.

This fact hath Iacobs ruler scene from heauen,

And through a cloud of smöake, and tower of fire

(As he rides vaunting him vpon the greens)

Shall teare his charior wheelles with violent winds,

And throw his body in the bloody sea,

At him the thunder shall discharge his bolt,

And his faire spouse, with bright and fierie wings

David and Berſabe.

Sit euer burning on his hatefull bones,
My ſelfe as ſwift as thunder, or his ſpouſe,
Will hunt occaſion with a ſecret hate,
To worke falſe Ammon an vngracious end :
Goe in my ſiſter, reſt thee in my houſe,
And God in time ſhall take this ſhame from thee.

Tham. Nor God nor Time will doe that good for me.

Exit Tham. reſtat Abſolon.

Enter David with his traine.

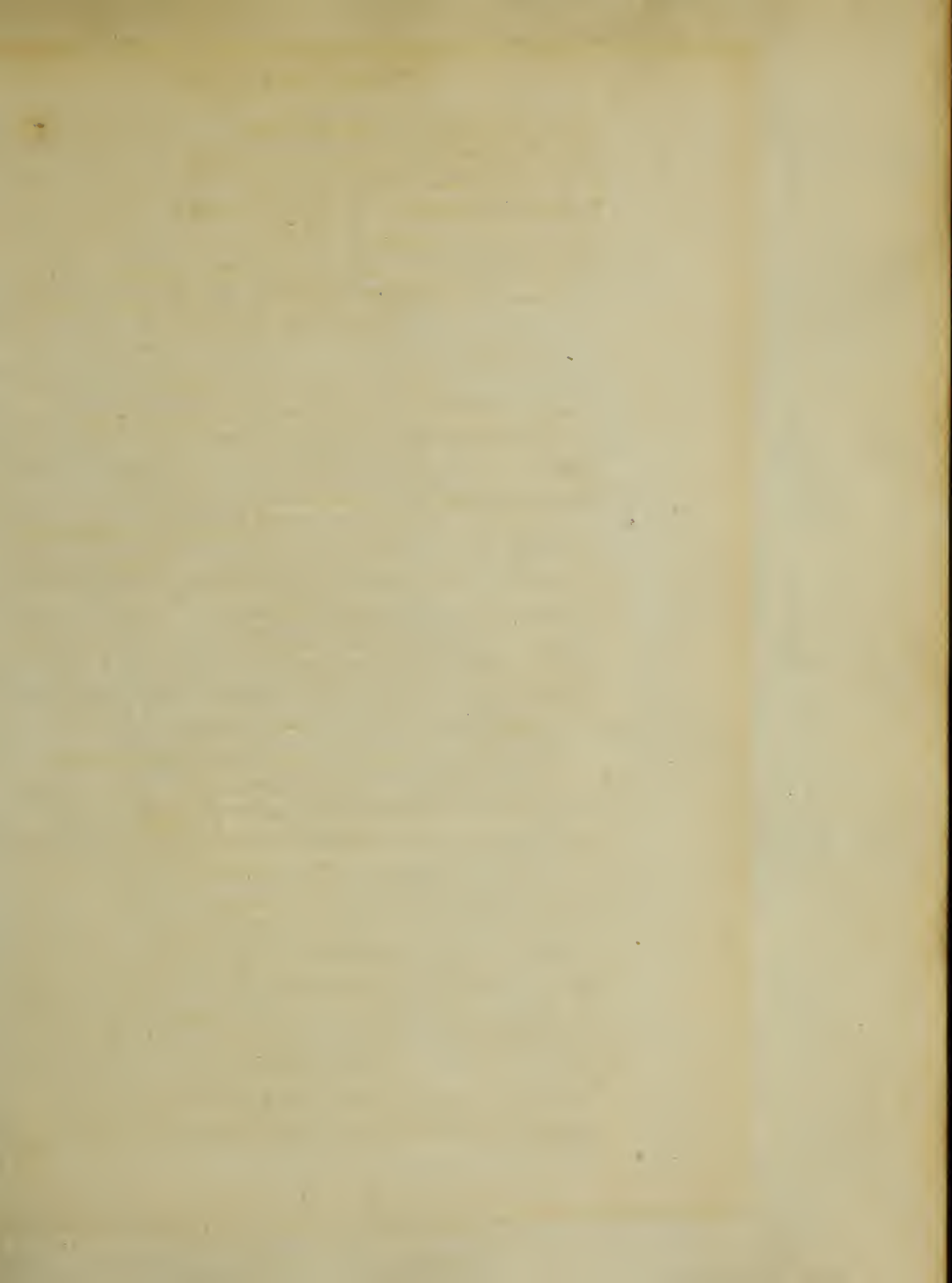
David. My Abſolon, what makſt thou here alone,
And beares ſuch diſcontentment in thy browes?

Abs. Great cauſe hath Abſolon to be diſpleaſd,
And in his heart to ſhrowd the wounds of wrath.

David. Gainſt whom ſhould Abſolon be thus diſpleaſed?

Abs. Gainſt wicked Ammon thy vngracious ſonne,
My brother and faire Thamar by the King,
My ſtepbrother, by mother, and by kind,
He hath diſhonoured Davids holineſſe,
And fixt a blot of lightneſſe on his throne,
Forcing my ſiſter Thamar when he ſaiſd
A ſickenſſe, ſprung from root of heinous luſt.

David. Hath Ammon brought this euill on my houſe,
And ſuffered ſinne to ſmite his fathers bones,
Smite David deadlier then the voice of heauen,
And let hates fire be kindled in thy heart,
Frame in the arches of thy angrie browes,
Making thy forehead like a comet ſhine,
To force falſe Ammon tremble at thy lookes,
Sin with his ſeuensfold crowne and purple robe,
Begins his triumphs in my guiltie throne,
There ſits he watching with his hundred eyes,
Our idle minuts, and our wanton thoughts,
And with his baits made of our fraile deſires,
Giues vs the hooke that hailes our ſoules to hell :
But with the ſpirit of my king domes God,



David and Bersabe.

He thrust the flattering Tyran from his throne,
And scourge his bondslaves from my hallowed court.
With rods of yron, and thornes of sharpened Steele.
Then Absolon reuenge not thou this sin,
Leaue it to me, and I will chasten him.

Abs. I am content, then graunt my lord the king
Himselfe with all his other lords would come
Vp to my sheepe feast on the plaine of Hazor.

Da. Nay my faire sonne, my selfe with all my lords
Will bring thee too much charge, yet some shall goe.

Abs. But let my lord the king himselfe take paines,
The time of yeare is pleasant for your grace,
And glad some Summer in her shade robes,
Crowned with Roses and with planted flowets,
With all her nimphs shall enterreine my lord,
That from the thicket of my verdant groues,
Will sprinckle hony dewes about his brest,
And cast sweet balme vpon his kingly head,
Then grant thy seruants boone, and goe my lord.

Da. Let it content my sweet sonne Absolon,
That I may stay and take my other lords.

Abs. But shall thy best beloued Ammon goe?

Da. What needeth it that Ammon goe with thee.

Abs. Yet doe thy sonne and seruant so much grace.

Da. Ammon shall goe, and all my other lords,
Because I will giue grace to Absolon.

Enter Cushay, and Vrias, with others.

Cushay. Pleaseth my lord the king, his seruant Iob
Hath sent Vrias from the Syrian wars.

Da. Welcome Vrias from the Syrian wars,
Welcome to David as his deereff lord.

Vrias. Thanks be to Israels God, and Davids grace,
Vrias finds such greeting with the king.

Da. No other greeting shall Vrias find,
As long as Davids swaies the elected seat,

David and Borthsabe.

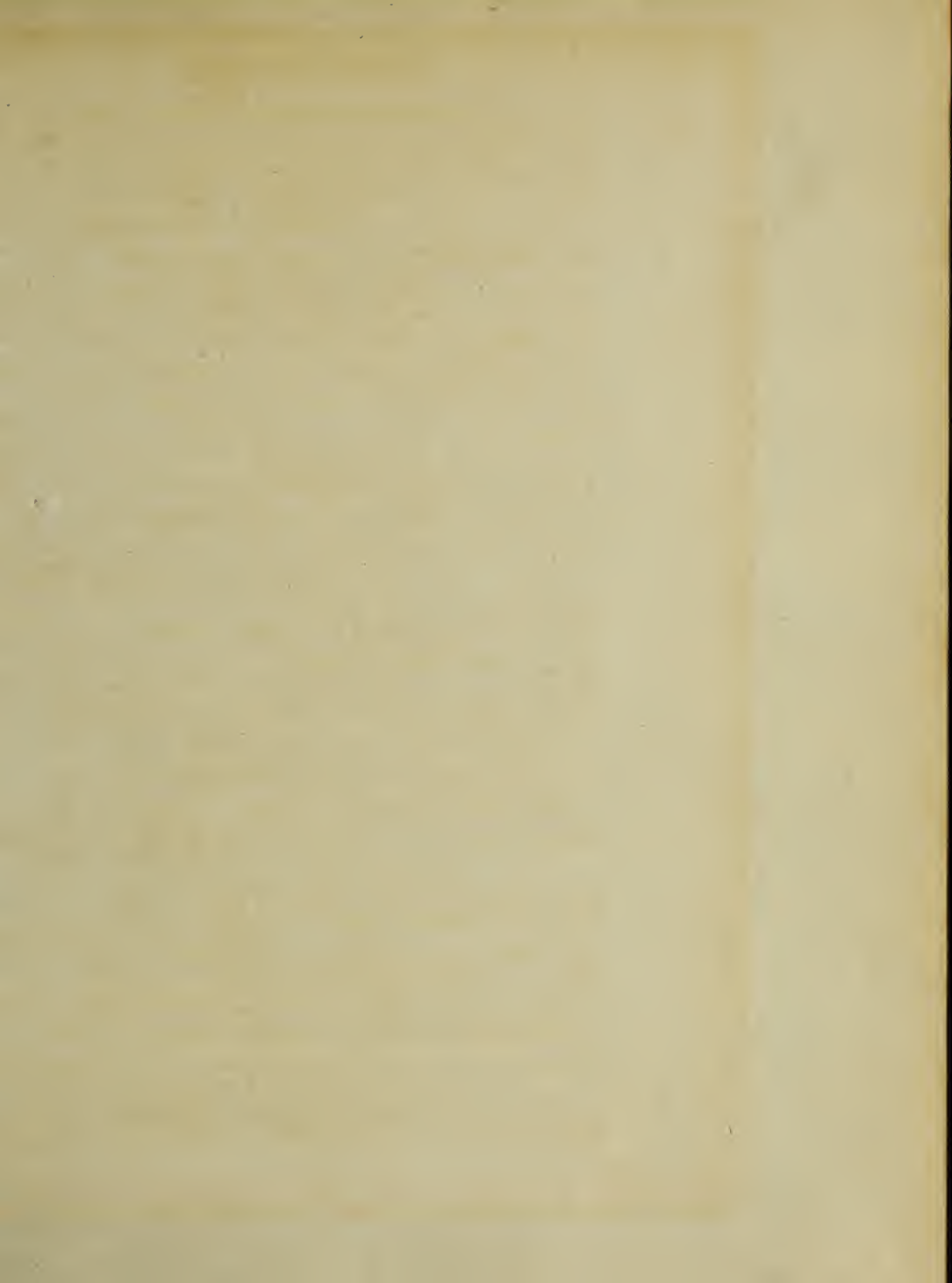
And consecrated throne of Israel;
Tell me Vrias of thy seruant Ioab,
Fights he with truth the battels of our God,
And for the honor of the Lords annointed;

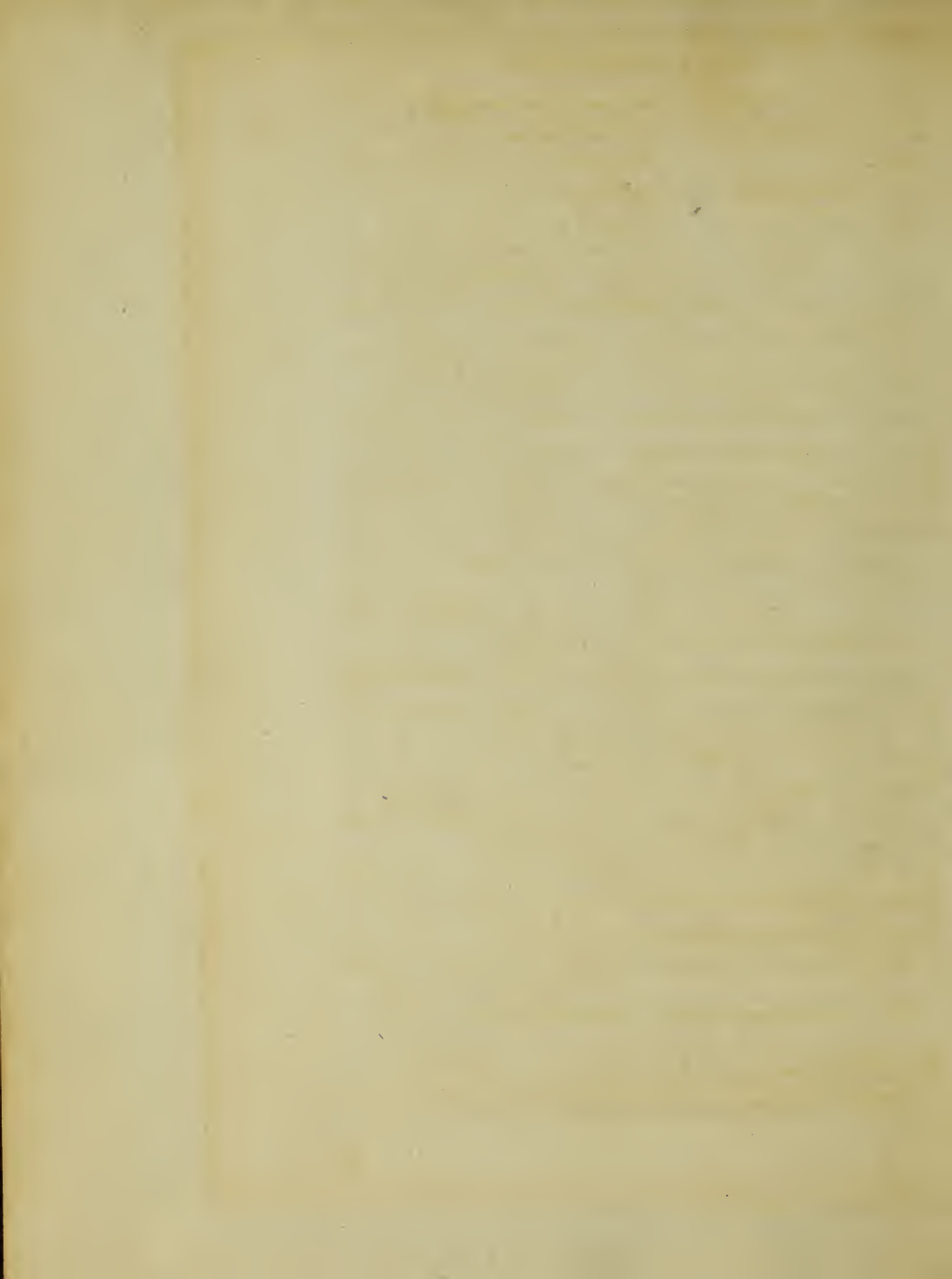
Vrias. Thy seruant Ioab fights the chosen wars
With truth, with honour, and with high successe,
And gainst the wicked King of Ammons sonnes,
Hath by the finger of our soueraines God,
Besieg'd the citie Rabath, and atchieu'd
The court of waters, where the conduits run,
And all the Ammonites delight some springs:
Therefore he wiseth Davids might inesse,
Should number out the host of Israels,
And come in person to the citie Rabath,
That so her conquest may be made the kings,
And Ioab fight as his inferior.

David. This hath not Gods, and Iobas prowesse done,
Without Vrias valours, I am sure,
Who since his true conuersion from a Hebrute,
To an adopted sonne of Israels,
Hath fought like one whose armes were lift by heauen,
And whose bright sword was edged with Israels wrath:
Goe therefore home Vrias, take thy rest,
Visit thy wife and household with the ioyes
A victor and a favorite of the Kings,
Should exercise with honor after armes;

Vrias. Thy seruants bones are yet not halfe so crarde,
Nor constitute on such a sickly mould,
That for so little seruice he should faint,
And seeke (as cowards) refuge of his home:
Nor are his thoughts so sensually stird,
To stay the armes with which the lord would smite
And fill their circle with his conquered foes,
For wanton bosome of a fluttering wife.

Da. Vrias hath a beauteous sober wife,
Yet yong, and framd of tempting flesh and bloud,
Then





David and Bethsabe.

Then when the King hath summoned thee from armes,

If thou vnkindly shouldst reframe, *David*

Sinne might be laid vpon Vrias soule, and bne, *Psalm 137*

If Bethsabe by frailtie hurt her fame, *Psalm 137*

Then goe Vrias, solace in her loue, *Psalm 137*

Whom God hath knit to thee, tremble to lose, *Psalm 137*

Vrias. The King is much too tender of my ease, *Psalm 137*

The arke, and Israell, and Iuda dwell *Psalm 137*

In pallaces, and rich pauillions, *Psalm 137*

But Ioab and his brother in the fields, *Psalm 137*

Suffering the wrath of Winter and the Sun, *Psalm 137*

And shall Vrias (of more shame then they) *Psalm 137*

Banquet and loiter in the worke of heauen, *Psalm 137*

As sure as thy soule doth liue my lord, *Psalm 137*

My eares shall neuer leane to such delight, *Psalm 137*

When holy labour calls me forth to fight, *Psalm 137*

David. Then be it with Vrias manly heart, *Psalm 137*

As best his fame may shine in Israell, *Psalm 137*

Vrias. Thus shall Vrias heart be best content, *Psalm 137*

Till thou dismisse me backe to Ioabs hands, *Psalm 137*

This ground before the king my masters dores, *Psalm 137*

Shall be my couch, and this vpwearied arme, *Psalm 137*

The proper pillow of a souldiours head, *Psalm 137*

For neuer will I lodge within my house, *Psalm 137*

Till Ioab triumph in my secret vowes, *Psalm 137*

David. Then fetch some flagons of our purest Wine, *Psalm 137*

That we may welcome home our hardie friend, *Psalm 137*

With full carouses to his fortunes past, *Psalm 137*

And to the honours of his future armes, *Psalm 137*

Then will I send him backe to Rabath siege, *Psalm 137*

And follow with the strength of Israell, *Psalm 137*

Enter one with the flagons of Wine.

Arise Vrias, come and pledge the King, *Psalm 137*

Vrias. If Dauid thinke me worthy such a grace, *Psalm 137*

David and Bersabe.

I will be bold, and pledge my lord the king.

Dau. Absolon and Cusay both shall drinke
To good Vrias, and his happinesse.

Abs. We will my lord to please Vrias soule.

Dau. I will begin Vrias to thy selfe,
And all the treasure of the Ammonites;

Which here I promise to impart to thee,
And bind that promise with a full carous.

Vrias. What seemeth pleasant in my souereines eyes,
That shall Vrias doe till he be dead.

Dau. Fill him the cup, follow ye lords that loue
Your souereines health; and doe as he hath done.

Abs. Ill may he thrive or liue in Israel,
That loues not David, or denies his charge.

Vrias, Here is to Abisais health, lord-Loabs brother, & thy lo-

Vrias. I pledge lord Absolon and Abisais health. *He drinke*
Cus. Here now Vrias, to the health of loab,

And to the pleasant iourney we shall haue,
When we returne to mightie Rabath siege.

Vrias. Cusay I pledge thee all, with all my heart,
Giue me some drinke ye seruants of the king;

Giue me my drinke: *He drinke*
Da. Well done my good Vrias, drinke thy fill,

That in thy fulnesse David may reioice.
Vrias. I will my lord.

Abs. Now lord Vrias, one carouse to me.
Vrias. No sir, He drinke to the King,

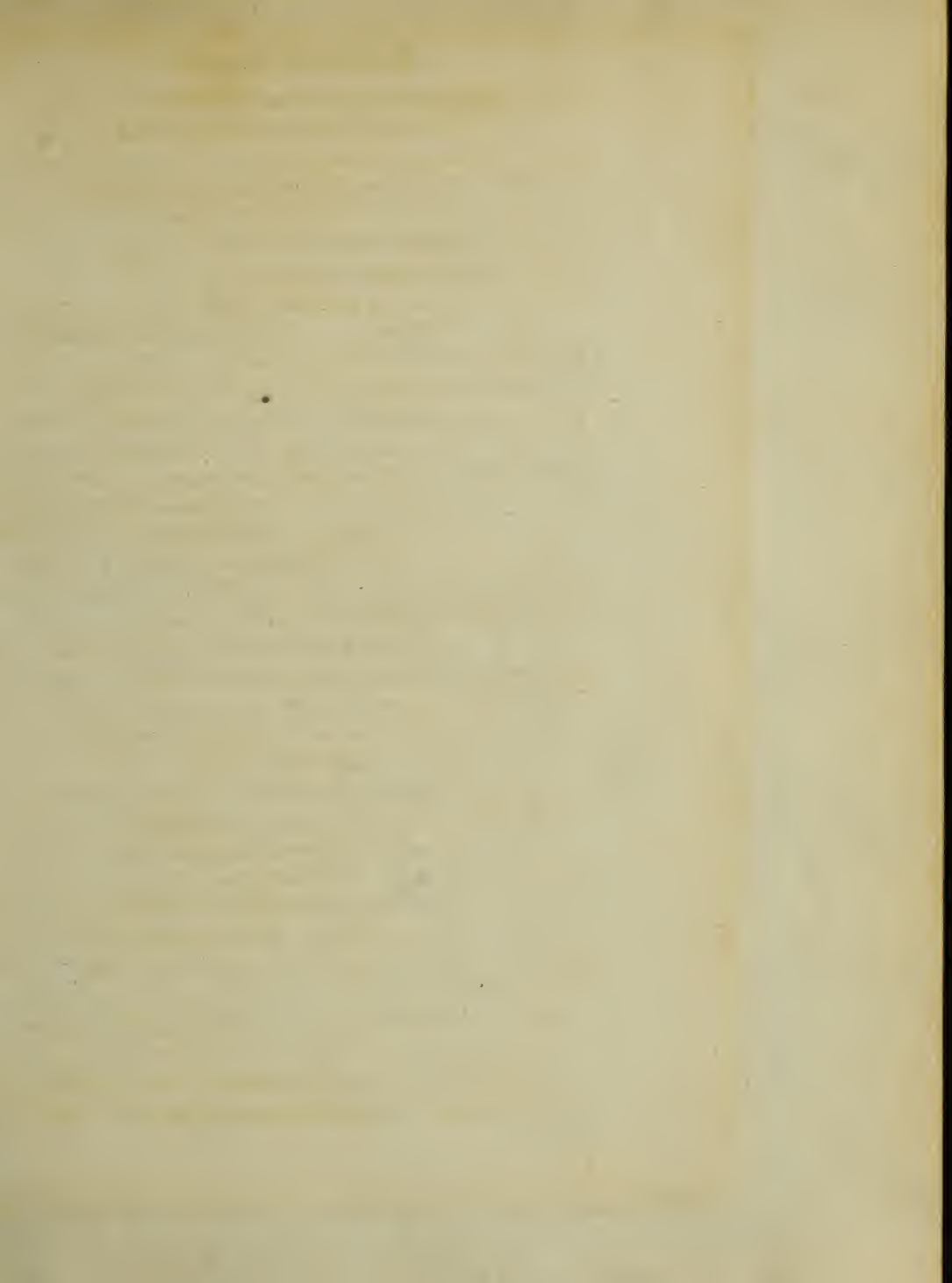
Your father is a better man then you.
Dau. Doe so Vrias, I will pledge thee straight.

Vrias. I will indeed my lord and souereine,
I once in my daies be so bold.

David. Fill him his glasse.
Vrias. Fill me my glasse. *He giues him the glasse.*

Dau. Quickly I say. *Vrias.* Quickly I say.
Vrias. Here my lord, by your fauour now I drinke to you.

Dau. I pledge thee good Vrias presently. *He drinke*
Ab.





David and Bersabe.

Abs. Here then *Vrias*, once againe for me,
And to the health of *Dauids* children.

Vrias. *Dauids* children?

Abs. I *Dauids* children, wilt thou pledge me man?

Vrias. Pledge me man.

Abs. Pledge me I say, or else thou louest vs not.

Vrias. What doe you talke, doe you talke?

Ile no more, Ile lie downe here.

David. Rather *Vrias* goe thou home and sleepe.

Vrias. O ho sir, would you make me break my sentence.

Helies downe.

Home sir, no indeed sir? Ile sleepe vpon mine arme,
Like a souldiour, sleepe like a man as long as I liue in *Israel*.

David. If nought will serue to saue his wiues renowne,
Ile send him with a letter vnto *Ioab*
To put him in the forefront of the wars,
That so my purposes may take effect.

Helpe him in firs. *Exit David and Absolon.*

Cusay. Come rise *Vrias*, get thee in and sleepe.

Vrias. I will not goe home sir, thats flat.

Cusay. Then come and rest thee vpon *Dauids* bed.

Vrias. On afore my lords, on afore. *Exeunt.*

Chorus.

O prowd reuolt of a presumptuous man,
Laying his bridle in the necke of sin,
Ready to beare him past his graue to hell,
Like as the fatall Rauen, that in his voice
Carries the dreadfull summons of our deaths,
Flies by the faire Arabian spiceries,
Her pleasant gardens, and delightfome parkes,
Seeming to curse them with his hoarse exclames,
And yet doth stoope with hungrie violence
Vpon a peece of hatefull carrion:
So wretched man, displeas'd with those delights,
Would yeeld a quickning fauor to his Soule,

D.

Pursues

David and Bethsabe.

Pursues with eagre and vnstanch'd thirst,
The greedie longings of his lothsome flesh,
If holy David so shoke hands with sinne,
What shall our baser spirits glorie in.
This kingly giuing lust her raigne,
Pursues the sequell with a greater ill.
Vrias in the forefront of the wars,
Is murdered by the hateful Heathens sword,
And David ioies his too deere Bethsabe,
Suppose this past, and that the child is borne,
Whose death the Prophet solemnly doth mourne.

Enter Bethsabe with her handmaid.

Beth. Mourne Bethsabe, bewaile thy foolishnesse;
Thy sinne, thy shame, the sorrow of thy soule,
Sinne, shame, and sorrow swarme about thy soule,
And in the gates and entrance of my heart,
Sadnesse with wreathed armes hangs her complaint.
No comfort from the ten string'd instrument,
The twinckling Cymball, or the Yuoric Lute,
Nor doth the sound of Dauids kingly Harpe,
Make glad the broken heart of Bersabe.
Ierusalem is fill'd with thy complaint,
And in the streets of Syon sits thy greefe:
The babe is sicke, sicke to the death I feare,
The fruit that sprung from thee to Dauids house,
Nor may the pot of Honny and of Oyle,
Glad David or his handmaids countenance.
Vrias, woe is me to thinke hereon,
For who is it among the sonnes of men,
That sayth not to my soule, the King hath sinned,
David hath done amisse, and Bersabe
Laid snares of death vnto Vrias life.
My sweet Vrias, fallne into the pit
Art thou, and gone euen to the gates of hell,

David and Bethsabe.

For Bethsabe, that wouldst not shrowd her shame.
O what is it to serue the lust of Kings,
How Lyonlike thy rage when we resist,
But Bethsabe in humbleness attend,
The grace that God will to his handmaid send. *Exit Beth.*

David in his gowre walking sadly. To him Nathan.

The babe is sicke, and sad is Davids hearr,
To see the guiltlesse beare the guilties paine.
David hang vp thy Harpe, hang downe thy head,
And dash thy yuorie Lute against the stones.
The dew that on the hill of Hermon fals,
Raines not on Syons tops, and loftie towers,
And Davids thoughts are spent in pensiuensse,
The plaines of Gath and Askaron reioice.
The babe is sicke, sweet babe, that Bethsabe
With womans paine brought forth to Israel. *Enter Nathan.*
But what saith Nathan to his lord the king?

Nathan to David.

Nathan. Thus Nathan saith vnto his Lord the King:

There were two men both dwellers in one towne,
The one was mighty and exceeding rich
In Oxen, sheepe and cattell of the field,
The other poore hauing nor Oxe, nor Calfe,
Nor other cattell, saue one little Lambe,
Which he had bought and nourisht by the hand,
And it grew vp, and fed with him and his,
And eat and dranke as he and his were wont,
And in his bosome slept, and was to liue
As was his daughter or his deerest child.
There came a stranger to this wealthy man,
And he refus'd and ipar'd to take his owne,
Or of his stote to dresse or make him meat,
But tooke the poore mans sheepe, partly poore mans store,
And drest it for this stranger in his house:
What (tell me) shall be done to him for this?

David and Berſabe.

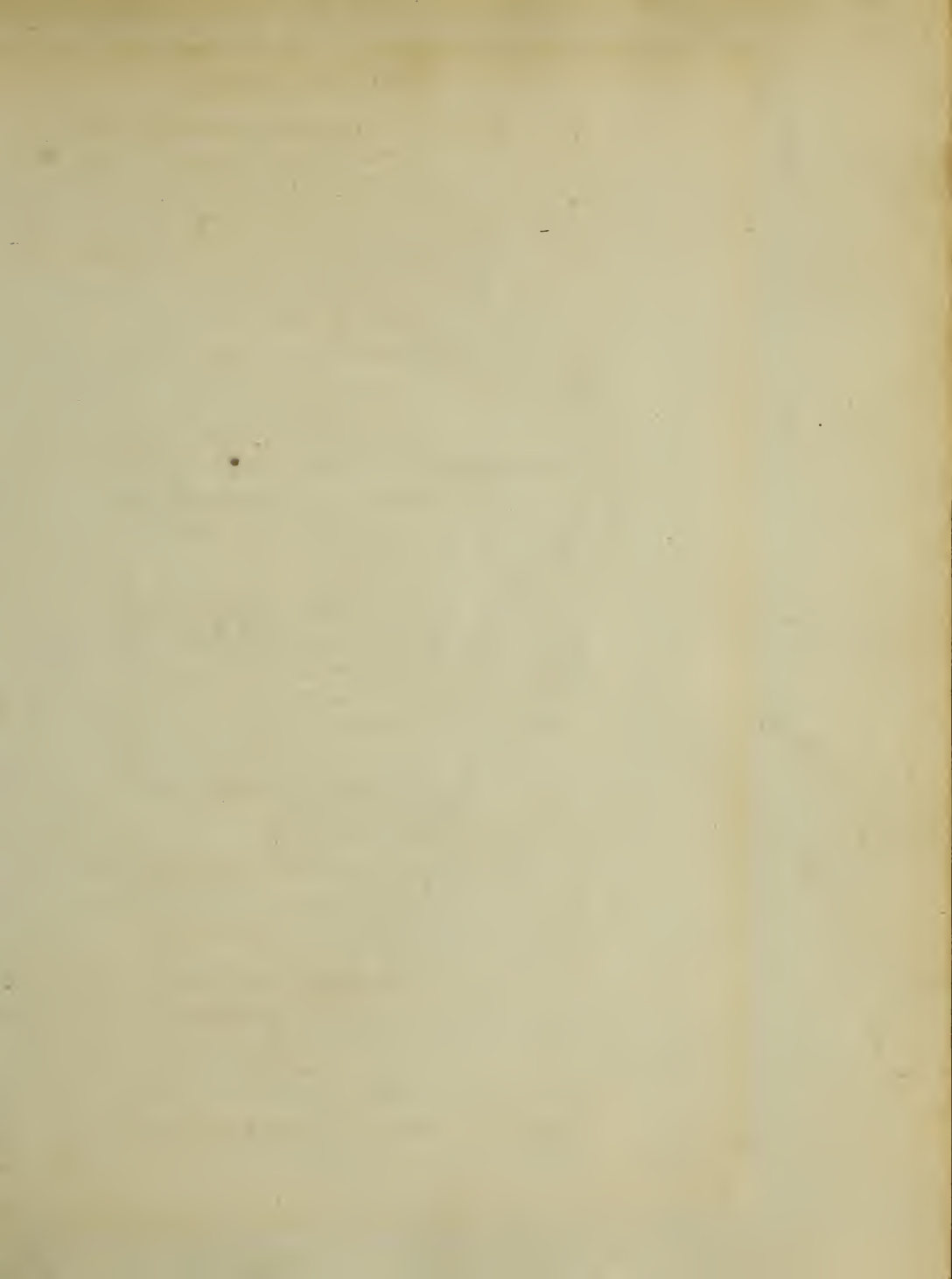
Dauid. Now as the lord doth liue, this wicked man
Is iudgd, and ſhall become the child of death,
Foure fold to the poore man ſhall hereſtore,
That without mercy tooke his lambe away.

Nath. Thou art the man, and thou haſt iudgd thy ſelfe,
Dauid, thus ſayth the Lord thy God by me:
I thee annointed King in Iſrael,
And ſawd thee from the tyranny of Saul,
Thy maiſters houſe I gaue thee to poſſeſſe,
His Wiues into thy boſome did I giue,
And Iuda and Ieruſalem withall,
And might (thou knoweſt) if this had ben too ſmall,
Haue giuen thee more,
Wherefore then haſt thou gone ſo far aſtray,
And haſt done euill, and ſinned in my ſight?
Vrias thou haſt killed with the ſword,
Yea with the ſword of the vncircumciſed
Thou haſt him ſlaine, wherefore from this day forth,
The ſword ſhall neuer goe from thee and thine:
For thou haſt tane this Hethites wife to thee,
Wherefore behold, I wil (ſaith Iacobs God)
In thine owne houſe ſtir euill vp to thee,
Yea I before thy face will take thy Wiues,
And giue them to thy neighbour to poſſeſſe:
This ſhall be done to Dauid in the day,
That Iſrael openly may ſee thy ſhame.

Dauid. Nathan, I haue againſt the Lord, I haue
Sinned, O ſinned greuously, and loe
From heauens throne doth Dauid throw himſelfe,
And grone and grouell to the gates of hell. *He falls downe.*

Nath. Dauid ſtand vp, Thus ſaith the Lord by me,
Dauid the King ſhall liue, for he hath ſeene
The true repentant ſorrow of thy heart,
But for thou haſt in this miſdeed of thine
Sturd vp the enemies of Iſrael
To triumph and blaſpheme the God of hoſts,

And





David and Berſabe.

And ſay, He ſet a wicked man to reigne,
Ouer his loued people and his Tribes:
The child ſhall ſurely die, that erſt was borne;
His mothers ſin, his kingly fathers ſcorne.

Exit Nathan.

Da. How iuſt is Iacobs God in all his workes!
But muſt it die that Dauid loueth ſo?
O that the mighty one of Iſrael
Nill change his dome, and ſayes the babe muſt die,
Mourne Iſrael and weepe in Syon gates,
Wither ye Cædar trees of Libanon,
Ye ſprouting Almons with your flowring tops,
Droope, drowne, and drench in Hebrons fearefull ſtreames,
The babe muſt die that was to Dauid borne,
His mothers ſin his kingly fathers ſcorne.

David ſits ſadly.

Enter Cuſay to Dauid and his traine.

Seruus. What tidings bringeth Cuſay to the King?

Cuſay. To thee the ſeruant of King Dauids court,
This bringeth Cuſay, as the Prophet ſpake,
The Lord hath ſurely ſtriken to the death,
The child new borne by that Vrias wife,
That by the ſonnes of Ammon erſt was ſlaine.

Seruus. Cuſay be ſtill, the King is vexed ſore,
How ſhal he ſpeed that brings this tidings firſt,
When while the child was yet aliae, we ſpake,
And Dauids heart would not be comforted?

Da. Yea Dauids heart will not be comforted,
What murmure ye the ſeruants of the King,
What tidings telleth Cuſay to the King?
Say Cuſay, liues the child, or is he dead?

Cuſay. The child is dead, that of Vrias wife, Dauid begat.

Da. Vrias wife ſaieſt thou?

The child is dead, then ceaſeth Dauids ſhame,
Fetch me to eat, and giue me Wine to drinke,

D iij

Water

Dauid and Bethsabe.

Water to wash, and Oyle to cleere my lookes,
Bring downe your Shalmes, your Cymbals, and your Pipes,
Let Dauids Harpe and Lute, his hand and voice,
Giue laud to him that loueth Israel,
And sing his praise, that shendeth Dauids fame,
That put away his sinne from out his sight,
And sent his shame into the streets of Gath,
Bring ye to me the mother of the babe;
That I may wipe the teares from off her face,
And giue her comfort with this hand of mine,
And decke faire Bersabe with ornaments,
That she may beare to me another sonne,
That may be loued of the Lord of hosts:
For where he is, of force must Dauid goe,
But neuer may he come where Dauid is.

They bring in water, wine, and oyle, Musike, and a banquet.

Faire Bersabe, sit thou, and sigh no more,
And sing and play you seruants of the King,
Now sleepeth Dauids sorrow with the dead,
And Bersabe liueth to Israel.

They vse all solemnities together, and sing, &c.

Dauid. Now armes, and warlike engins for assault,
Prepare at once ye men of Israel,
Ye men of Iuda and Ierusalem,
That Rabba may be taken by the King,
Least it be called after Iobas name,
Nor Dauids glory shine in Syon streets,
To Rabba marcheth Dauid with his men
To chastise Ammon and the wicked ones. *Exeunt omnes.*

Enter Absolon with two or three.

Abs. Set vp your mules, and giue them well to eat,
And let vs meet our brothers at the feast,
Accursed is the maister of this feast,

Dis honour

Dauid and Bethsabe.

Dishonour of the house of Israel,
His sisters slander, and his mothers shame.
Shame be his share that could such ill contriue,
To rauish Thamar, and without a pause
To driue her shamefully from out his house,
But may his wickednesse find iust reward.
Therefore doth Absolon conspire with you,
That Ammon die what time he sits to eat,
For in the holy Temple haue I sworne
Wreake of his villany in Thamars rape.
And here he comes, bespeake him gently all,
Whose death is deeply graued in my heart.

*Enter Ammon with Adnia and Ionadab, to Absolon
and his companie.*

Am. Our shearers are not far from hence I wor,
And Ammon, to you all his brethren
Giue such welcome as our fathers erst
Were wont in Iuda and Ierusalem;
But specially Lord Absolon to thee,
The honour of thy house and progenie.
Sit downe and dine with me King Dauids sonne,
Thou faire young man, whose haire shine in mine eye
Like golden wyers of Dauids yuorie Lute.

Abs. Ammon, where be thy shearers and thy men,
That we may powre in plenty of thy vines,
And eat thy goats milke, and reioice with thee.

Am. Here commeth Ammons shearers and his men,
Absolon sit and reioice with me.

*Here enter a company of sheepeheards, and
daunce and sing.*

Am. Drinke Absolon in praise of Israel,
Welcome to Ammons fields from Dauids court.

Abs. Die with thy draught perish and die accurst,

Dishonour

David and Bersabe.

Dishonour to the honour of vs all,
Die for the villany to Thamar done,
Vnworthy thou to be Kings Dauids sonne. *Exit Absa.*
Ionad. O what hath Absolon for Thamar done,
Murthred his brother, great king Dauids sonne.
Adon. Run Ionadab away, and make it knowne,
What cruelty this Absolon hath showne.
Ammon, thy brother Adonia shall
Bury thy body among the dead mens bones,
And we will make complaint to Israel
Of Ammons death, and pride of Absolon. *Exeunt omnes.*

*Enter David with Ioab, Abyssus, Cusay, with drum and
ensigne against Rabba.*

This is the towne of the vacircumcised,
The citie of the kingdome, this is it,
Rabba where wicked Hannon sitteth king:
Dispoile this King, this Hannon of his crowne,
Vnpeople Rabba, and the streets thereof,
For in their blood and slaughter of the slaine,
Lyeth the honor of King Dauids line.
Ioab. Abyshai, and the rest of you,
Fight ye this day for great Ierusalem.
Ioab. And see where Hannon shewes him on the wals,
Why then do we forbear to giue assault,
That Israel may as it is promised,
Subdue the daughters of the Gentils Tribes,
All this must be performd by Dauids hand.
Da. Harke to me Hannon, and remember well,
As sure as he doth liue that kept my host,
What time our young men by the poole of Gibeon,
Went forth against the strength of Isboseth,
And twelue to twelue did with their weapons play,
So sure art thou, and thy men of war
To feele the sword of Israel this day,

Because

David and Bersabe.

Because thou hast defied Iacobs God,
And suffered Rabba with the Philistime
To raile vpon the tribe of Benjamin,

Hannon. Harke man, as sure as Saul thy maister fell,
And gord his sides vpon the mountaine tops
And Ionathan, Abinadab, and Melchifua
Watred the dales and deepes of Askaron
With bloody streames that from Gilboa ran
In channels through the wildernesse of Ziph,
What time the sword of the vncircumfised
Was drunken with the bloud of Israel:
So sure shall Dauid perish with his men,
Vnder the wals of Rabba, Hannons towne.

Ioab. Hannon, the God of Israel hath said,
Dauid the King shall weare that crowne of thine,
That weighs a Talent of the finest gold,
And triumph in the spoile of Hannons towne,
When Israel shall hale thy people hence,
And turne them to the tile-kill, man and child,
And put them vnder harrowes made of yron,
And hew their bones with axes, and their lims
With yron swords deuide and teare in twaine.
Hannon, this shall be done to thee and thine,
Because thou hast defied Israel.
To armes, to armes, that Rabba feele reuenge,
And Hannons towne become king Dauids spoile.

*Alarum, excursions, assault, Exeunt omnes. Then the trumpets, and
David with Hannons crowne.*

DAM. Now clattering armes, and wrathfull storms of war,
Haue thundred ouer Rabbaes rased towers,
The wreakefull ire of great Ichouaes arme,
That for his people made the gates to rend,
And clothed the Cherubins in fierie coats,
To fight against the wicked Hannons towne,

David and Bethsabe.

Pay thanks ye men of Iuda to the King,
The God of Syon and Ierusalem,
That hath exalted Israel to this,
And crowned David with this diademe.

Ioab. Beauteous and bright is he among the Tribes,
As when the sunne attird in glist'ring robe,
Comes dauncing from his orientall gate,
And bridegroome-like hurles through the gloomy aire
His radiant beames, such doth King David shew,
Crownd with the honour of his enemies towne,
Shining in riches like the firmament,
The starrie vault that ouerhangs the earth,
So looketh David King of Israel.

Abschai. Ioab, why doth not David mount his throne,
Whom heauen hath beautified with Hannons crowne,
Sound Trumpets, Shalmes, and Instruments of praise
To Iacobs God for Dauids victory.

Enter Ionadab.

Ionadab. Why doth the King of Israel reioice,
Why sitteth David crownd with Rabbaes rule,
Behold there hath great heauinesse befallne
In Ammons fields by Absolons misdeed,
And Ammons shearers, and their feast of mirth
Absalon hath ouerturned with his sword,
Nor liueth any of King Dauids sonnes,
To bring this bitter tidings to the King.

David. Ay me, how soone are Dauids triumphs dashed,
How suddenly declineth Dauids pride,
As doth the daylight settle in the west,
So dim is Dauids glory, and his gite.
Die David, for to thee is left no seed,
That may reuiue thy name in Israel.

Iona. In Israel is left of Dauids seed.

Enter Adonia with other sonnes.

Comfort your lord, you seruants of the King,

Behold

David and Bethsabe.

Behold thy sonnes returne in mourning weeds,
And only Ammon, Absalon hath slaine.

Da. Welcome my sonnes, deere to me you are
Then is this golden crowne, or Hannons spoile.
O tell me then, tell me my sonnes I say,
How commeth it to passe, that Absolon
Hath slaine his brother Ammon with the sword?

Ado. Thy sonnes O King went vp to Ammons fields
To feast with him, and eat his bread and oyle,
And Absalon vpon his mule doth come,
And to his men he sayth, When Ammons heart
Is merry and secure, then strike him dead,
Because he forced Thamar shamefully,
And hated her, and threw her forth his dores:
And this did he, and they with him conspire,
And kill thy sonne in wreake of Thamar's wrong.

David. How long shall Iuda and Ierusalem
Complaine and water Syon with their teares?
How long shall Israel lament in vaine,
And not a man among the mighty ones
Will heare the sorrowes of King Dauids heart?
Ammon thy life was pleasing to thy Lord,
As to mine eares the Musike of my Lute,
Or songs that David tuneth to his Harpe,
And Absalon hath tane from me away
The gladnesse of my sad distressed soule. *Exeunt omnes.*

Manet David, Enter widdow of Thecoa.

Widdow. God saue King David, King of Israel,
And blesse the gates of Syon for his sake.

Da. Woman, why mournest thou, rise from the earth,
Tell me what sorrow hath befallne thy soule.

Widdow. Thy seruants soule O King is troubled fore,
And greenous is the anguish of her heart,
And from Thecoa doth thy handmaid come.

David. Tell me, and say, thou woman of Thecoa,

David and Berſabe.

What aileth thee, or what is come to paſſe.

Widdow. Thy ſeruant is a widdow in Thecoa,
Two ſonnes thy handmaid had, and they (my lord)
Fought in the field, where no man went betwixt,
And ſo the one did ſmite and ſlay the other.
And loe behold the kindred doth ariſe,
And crie on him that ſmote his brother,
That he therefore may be the child of death,
For we will follow and deſtroy the heire.
So will they quench that ſparkle that is left,
And leaue nor name, nor iſſue on the earth,
To me, or to thy handmaids husband dead.

Dauid. Woman returne, goe home vnto thy houſe,
I will take order that thy ſonne be ſafe,
If any man ſay otherwiſe then well,
Bring him to me, and I ſhall chaſtiſe him :
For as the Lord doth liue, ſhall not a haire
Shed from thy ſonne, or fall vpon the earth.
Woman to God alone belongs reuenge,
Shall then the kindred ſlay him for his ſinne?

Widdow. Well hath King Dauid to his handmaid ſpoke,
But wherefore then haſt thou determined
So hard a part againſt the righteous Tribes
To follow and purſue the baniſhed,
When as to God alone, belongs reuenge.
Aſſuredly thou ſaiſt againſt thy ſelfe,
Therefore call home againe the baniſhed,
Call home the baniſhed, that he may liue,
And raiſe to thee ſome fruit in Iſrael.

Da. Thou woman of Thecoa anſwere me,
Anſwere me one thing I ſhall aſke of thee,
Is not the hand of Ioab in this worke?
Tell me is not his finger in this fact?

Wid. It is my lord, his hand is in this worke,
Aſſure thee, Ioab captaine of thy hoſt,
Hath put theſe words into thy handmaids mouth,

And

Dauid and Bersabe.

And thou art as an angel from on high,
To vnderstand the meaning of my heart,
Lo where he commeth to his lord the King.

Enter Ioab.

Dauid. Say Ioab, didst thou send this woman in
To put this parable for Absalon.

Ioab. Ioab my lord did bid this woman speake,
And she hath said, and thou hast vnderstood.

Dauid. I haue and am content to do the thing,
Goe fetch my sonne, that he may liue with me.

Ioab kneeles.

Ioab. Now God be blessed for King Dauids life,
Thy seruant Ioab hath found grace with thee,
In that thou sparest Absolon thy child,
A beautifull and faire young man is he,
In all his bodie is no blemish seene,
His haire is like the wyer of Dauids Harpe,
That twines about his bright and yuorie necke:
In Israel is not such a goodly man,
And here I bring him to entreat for grace.

Enter Absolon with Ioab.

Dauid. Hast thou slaine in the fields of Hazor
Ah Absalon my sonne, ah my sonne Absolon,
But wherefore doe I vexe thy spirit so,
Liue and returne from Gesur to thy house,
Returne from Gesur to Ierusalem,
What boots it to be bitter to thy soule,
Ammon is dead, and Absolon suruiues.

Abf. Father I haue offended Israel,
I haue offended Dauid and his house,
For Thamar's wrong hath Absolon misdone,
But Dauid's heart is free from sharpe reuenge,
And Ioab hath got grace for Absalon.

David and Bethsabe.

David. Depart with me you men of Israel,
You that haue followed Rabba with the sword,
And ranlacke Ammons richest treasuries,
Liue Absalon my sonne, liue once in peace,
Peace with thee, and with Ierusalem.

Exeunt omnes.

Manet Absolon.

Abf. David is gone, and Absolon remaines,
Flouring in pleasant spring time of his youth,
Why liueth Absolon, and is not honoured
Of Tribes and Elders, and the mightiest ones,
That round about his Temples he may weare
Garlands and wreaths set on with reuerence,
That euery one that hath a cause to plead,
Might come to Absolon, and call for right?
Then in the gates of Syon would I sit,
And publish lawes in great Ierusalem,
And not a man should liue in all the land,
But Absolon would doe him reasons due,
Therefore I shall addresse me as I may,
To loue the men and Tribes of Israel.

Exit.

*Enter David, Ithay, Sadoc, Ahimaas, Jonathan, with others,
David barefoot, with some lose covering ouer his
head, and all mourning.*

Dau. Proud lust the bloudiest traitor to our soules,
Whose greedie throte, nor earth, aire, sea, or heauen,
Can glut or satisfie with any store,
Thou art the cause these torments sucke my blood,
Piercing with venome of thy poysoned eies,
The strength and marrow of my tainted bones:
To punish Pharaoh, and his cursed host,
The waters shrinke at great Adonaies voice,

And





Dauid and Bethsabe.

And sandie bottome of the sea appeard,
Offering his seruice at his seruants feet,
And to inflict a plague on Dauids sinne,
He makes his bowels traitors to his breast,
Winding about his heart with mortall gripes.
Ah Absalon the wrath of heauen inflames
Thy scorched bosome with ambitious heat,
And Sathan sets thee on a lustie tower,
Shewing thy thoughts the pride of Israel
Of choice to cast thee on her ruthlesse stones,
Weepe with me then ye sonnes of Israel.

He lies downe, and all the rest after him.

Lie downe with Dauid, and with Dauid mourne,
Before the holy one that sees our hearts,
Season this heauie soile with showers of teares,
And fill the face of euery flower with dew,
Weepe Israel, for Dauids soule dissolues,
Lading the fountaines of his drowned eyes,
And powres her substance on the sencelesse earth.

Sadoc. Weepe Israel, O weepe for Dauids soule,
Strewing the ground with haire and garments torne,
For tragicke witnessse of your heartie woes.

Abimaas. O would our eyes were conduits to our hearts,
And that our hearts were seas of liquid bloud,
To powre in streames vpon this holy Mount,
For witnessse we would die for Dauids woes.

Iona. Then should this mount of Oliues seeme a plaine,
Drownd with a sea, that with our sighs should rore,
And in the murmure of his mounting waues,
Report our bleeding sorrowes to the heauens,
For witnessse we would die for Dauids woes.

Ith. Earth cannot weepe ynough for Dauids woes,
Then weepe you heauens, and all you clouds dissolue,
That pittious stars may see our miseries,
And drop their golden teares vpon the ground,
For witnessse how they weepe for Dauids woes.

Sadoc.

David and Bersabe.

Sadoc. Now let my soueraigne raise his prostrate bones,
And mourne not as a faithlesse man would doe,
But be assur'd, that Iacobs righteous God,
That promitt neuer to forsake your throne,
Will still be iust and pure in his vowes.

Da. Sadoc high priest, preseruer of the arke,
Whose sacred vertue keepes the chosen crowne,
I know my God is spotlesse in his vowes,
And that these haire shall greet my graue in peace:
But that my sonne should wrong his tendred soule,
And fight against his fathers happinesse,
Turnes all my hopes into despaire of him,
And that despaire, feeds all my veines with greefe.

Ithay. Thinke of it David, as a fatall plague,
Which greefe preserueth, but preuenteth not,
And turne thy drooping eyes vpon the troupes
That of affection to thy worthinesse,
Doe swarme about the person of the King,
Cherish their valours, and their zealous loues,
With pleasant lookes, and sweet encouragements.

Da. Me thinks the voice of Ithay fills mine eares.

Ith. Let not the voice of Ithay loth thine eares,
Whose heart would baulme thy bosome with his teares.

David. But wherefore goest thou to the wars with vs,
Thou art a stranger here in Israel,
And sonne to Achis mightie king of Gath,
Therefore returne, and with thy father stay,
Thou camst but yesterday, and should I now
Let thee partake these troubles here with vs?
Keepe both thy selfe, and all thy souldiors safe,
Let me abide the hazards of these armes,
And God requite the friendship thou hast shewd.

Ith. As sure as Israels God giues David life,
What place or perill shall containe the King,
The same will Ithay share in life and death.

Da. Then gentle Ithay be thou still with vs,



Dauid and Berſabe.

A ioy to Dauid, and a grace to Iſrael.
Goe Sadoc now, and beare the arke of God
Into the great Ieruſalem againe,
If I find fauour in his gracious eyes,
Then will he lay his hand vpon my heart
Yet once againe before I viſit death,
Giuing it ſtrength and vertue to mine eies,
To taſt the comforts, and behold the forme
Of his faire arke, and holy tabernacle,
But if he ſay my wonted loue is worne,
And I haue no delight in Dauid now,
Here lie I armed with an humble heart,
T' embrace the paines that anger ſhall impoſe,
And kiſſe the ſword my lord ſhall kill me with,
Then Sadoc take Ahimaas thy ſonne,
With Ionathan ſonne to Abiathar,
And in theſe fields will I reſoſe my ſelfe,
Till they returne from you ſome certaine newes.

Sadoc. Thy ſeruants will with ioy obey the King,
And hope to cheere his heart with happy newes.

Exit Sadoc, Ahimaas, and Ionathan.

Ith. Now that it be no greefe vnto the King,
Let me for good enforme his maieſtic,
That with vnkind and graceleſſe Abſalon,
Achitophel your auncient counſellor,
Direc'ts the ſtate of this rebellion.

Dauid. Then doth it aime with danger at my crowne,
O thou that holdſt his raging bloody bound,
Within the circle of the ſiluer moone,
That girds earths center with his warrie ſcarfe,
Limit the counſell of Achitophel,
No bounds extending to my ſoules diſtreſſe,
But turne his wiſdome into fooliſhneſſe.

Enter Cuſay with his coat turnd, and head covered.

Cuſay. Happineſſe and honour to my lord the King.

David and Bethsabe.

David. What happinesse or honor may betide
His state that toiles in my extremities ?

Cus. O let my gracious soueraine cease these greeses,
Vnlesse he with his seruaur Cusayes death,
Whose life depends vpon my lords releefe,
Then let my presence with my sighs, perfume
The pleasant closet of my soueraignes soule.

Da. No Cusay no, thy presence vnto me,
Will be a burthen since I tender thee,
And cannot breake thy sighs for Dauids sake :
But if thou turne to faire Ierusalem,
And say to Absalon, as thou hast been
A trusty friend vnto his fathers seat,
So thou wilt be to him, and call him King,
Achitophels counsell may be brought to naught.
Then hauing Sadoc and Abiathar,
All three may learne the secrets of my sonne,
Sending the message by Ahimaas,
And friendly Ionathan, who both are there,
Then rise, referring the successe to heauen.

Da. Cusay I rise, though with vnweldie bones,
I carrie armes against my Absalon.

Exeunt.

*Absalon, Amasa, Achitophiel; with the concubines of David, and
others in great state, Absalon crowned.*

Abs. Now you that were my fathers concubines,
Liquor to his in chast and lustfull fire,
Haue seene his honour shaken in his house,
Which I possesse in sight of all the world.
I bring ye forth for soules to my renowne,
And to eclipse the glorie of your King,
Whose life is with his honour fast inclosd.
Within the entrailes of a Teatie cloud,
Whose dissolution shall powre downe in showers
The substance of his life and swelling pride :

Then



David and Bethsabe.

Then shall the stars light earth with rich aspects,
And heauen shall burne in loue with Absalon,
Whose beaurie will suffice to chaste all mists,
And cloth the suns speare with a triple fire,
Sooner then his cleare eyes should suffer staine,
Or be offended with a lowring day.

Concub. Thy fathers honour, gracelesse Absalon,
And ours thus beaten with thy violent armes,
Will crie for vengeance to the host of heauen,
Whose power is euer armed against the prowde,
And will dart plagues at thy aspiring head,
For doing this disgrace to Dauids throne.

2. To Dauids throne, to Dauids holy throne,
Whose scepter angels guard with swords of fire,
And sit as Eagles on his conquering fist,
Ready to prey vpon his enemies,
Then thinke not thou the captaine of his foes,
Wert thou much swifter then Azahell was,
That could out pace the nimble footed Roe,
To scape the fume of their thumping beakes,
Or dreadfull scope of their commanding wings.

Achip. Let not my lord the King of Israel
Be angrie with a sillie womans threats,
But with the pleasure he hath erst enioied,
Turne them into their cabinets againe,
Till Dauids conquest be their ouerthrow.

Abs. Into your bowers ye daughters of Disdaine,
Gotten by furie of vnbridled lust,
And wash your couches with your mourning teares,
For greefe that Dauids kingdome is decayed.

1. No Absalon, his kingdome is enchaund
Fast to the finger of great Iacobs God,
Which will not lose it for a rebels loue.

Exeunt.

Amasa. If I might giue aduise vnto the King,
These concubines should buy their taunts with blood.

Abs. Amasa no, but let thy mutuall sword

David and Berſabe.

Empty the paines of Dauids armed men,
And let theſe fooliſh women ſcape our hands
To recompence the ſhame they haue ſuſtaind.
Firſt Abſolon was by the Trumpets ſound
Proclaimd through Hebron King of Iſrael,
And now is ſet in faire Ieruſalem
With complete ſtate, and glorie of a crowne.
Fiftie faire footmen by my chariot run,
And to the aire whoſe rupture rings my fame,
Where ere I ride they offer reuerence.
Why ſhould not Abſolon, that in his face
Carries the ſinall purpoſe of his God,
That is, to worke him grace in Iſrael;
Endeuour to atchieue with all his ſtrength,
The ſtate that moſt may ſatiſfie his ioy,
Keeping his ſtatutes and his couenants pure,
His thunder is intangled in my haire,
And with my beautie is his lightning quencht,
I am the man he made to glorie in,
When by the errors of my fathers ſinne,
He loſt the path that led into the land,
Wherewith our choſen anceſtors were bleſt.

Enter Cuſay.

Cuſ. Long may the beautious King of Iſrael liue,
To whom the people doe by thouſands ſwarne.

Abs. What meaneth Cuſay ſo to greet his foe,
Is this the loue thou ſhewdſt to Dauids ſoule,
To whoſe aſiſtance thou haſt vowed thy life,
Why leaueſt thou him in this extremitie.

Cuſ. Becauſe the Lord and Iſrael chuſeth thee,
And as before I ſerud thy fathers turne,
With counſell acceptable in his ſight,
So likewise will I now obey his ſonne.

Abs. Then welcome Cuſay to king Abſalon,
And now my lords and louing counſellors,
I thinke it time to exerciſe our armes

Againſt



David and Bersabe.

Against forsaken Dauid and his host,
Giue counsell first my good Achitophel,
What times and orders we may best obserue,
For prosperous manage of these high exploits.

Achi. Let me chuse out twelue thousand valiant men,
And (while the night hides with her sable mists
The close endeuors cunning souldiers vse)
I will assault thy discontented fire,
And while with weakenesse of their wearie armes;
Surchargd with toile to shun thy suddaine power,
The people flie in huge disordred troupes
To saue their liues, and leaue the King alone,
Then will I smite him with his latest wound,
And bring the people to thy feet in peace.

Abs. Well hath Achitophel giuen his aduise,
Yet let vs heare what Cusay counsels vs,
Whose great experience is well worth the eare.

Cus. Though wise Achitophel be much more meet
To purchase hearing with my lord the King,
For all his former counsels, then my selfe,
Yet not offending Absolon or him,
This time it is not good, nor worth pursute:
For well thou knowest thy fathers men are strong,
Chasing as shee beares robbed of their whelpes.
Besides the King himselve a valiant man,
Traind vp in feats and stratagemes of warre,
And will not for preuention of the worst
Lodge with the common souldiers in the field:
But now I know his wonted policies
Haue taught him lurke within some secret caue,
Guarded with all his stoutest souldiers,
Which if the forefront of his battell faint,
Will yet giue out that Absalon doth flie,
And so thy souldiers be discouraged.
Dauid himselve withall, whose angry heart
Is as a Lyons, letted of his walke,

David and Bethsabe.

Will fight him selfe, and all his men to one,
Before a few shall vanquish him by feare.
My counsell therefore, is with Trumpets sound
To gather men from Dan to Berfabe,
That they may march in number like sea sands,
That nestle close in anothers necke:
So shall we come vpon him in our strength,
Like to the dew that falls in showers from heauen,
And leaue him not a man to march withall.
Besides if any citie succour him,
The numbers of our men shall fetch vs ropes,
And we will pull it downe the riuers streame,
That not a stone be left to keepe vs out.

Abs. What saies my lord to Cusaies counsell now?

Ama. I fancie Cusaies counsell better farre
Then that is giuen vs from Achitophel,
And so I thinke doth euery souldier here.

All. Cusaies counsell is better then Achitophels.

Abs. Then march we after Cusaies counsell all,
Sound trumpets through the bounds of Israell,
And muster all the men will serue the King,
That Absalon may glut his longing soule
With sole fruition of his fathers crowne.

Exeunt.

Ach. Ill shall they fare that follow thy attempts,
That skorne the counsell of Achitophel.

Restat Cusay.

Cusay. Thus hath the power of Iacobs iealous God
Fulfil'd his seruants Dauids drifts by me,
And brought Achitophels aduise to scorne.

Enter Sadoc, Abiathar, Ahimaas, and Ionathan.

Sadoc. God saue lord Cusay, and direct his zeale
To purchase Dauids conquest gainst his sonne.

Abia. What secrets hast thou gleande from Absalon,

Cusay. These sacred priests that beare the arke of God,
Achitophel aduis'd him in the night

David and Bethsabe.

To let him chuse twelue thousand fighting men,
And he would come on David at vnwares,
While he was wearie with his violent toile:
But I aduisd to get a greater host,
And gather men from Dan to Bersabe,
To come vpon him strongly in the fields.
Then send Ahimaas and Ionathan
To signifie these secrets to the King,
And will him not to stay this night abroad,
But get him ouer Iordane presently,
Least he and all his people kisse the sword.

Sadoc. Then goe Ahimaas and Ionathan,
And straight conuey this message to the King.

Ahim. Father we will, if Absalons cheefe spies
Preuent not this deuise, and stay vs here. *Exeunt.*

Semei solus.

Semei. The man of Israel, that hath rul'd as King,
Or rather as the Tyrant of the land,
Bolstering his hatefull head vpon the throne,
That God vnworthily hath blest him with,
Shall now I hope, lay it as low as hell,
And be depos'd from his detested chaire:
O that my bosome could by nature beare,
A sea of poyson to be powr'd vpon
His curst head that sacred baulme hath grac'd,
And consecrated King of Israel:
Or would my breath were made the smoke of hell,
Infected with the sighs of damned soules,
Or with the reeking of that serpents gorge,
That feeds on adders, toads, and venomous roots,
That as I opened my reuenging lips
To curse the sheepeheard for his Tyrannie,
My words might cast rancke poyson to his pores,
And make his swolne and ranckling sinewes cracke,
Like to the combat blowes that breake the clouds,
When Ioues stout champions fight with fire,

See

Dauid and Bersabe.

See where he commeth, that my soule abhors.
I haue prepar'd my pocket full of stones
To cast at him, mingled with earth and dust,
Which bursting with disdain, I greet him with.

Dauid, Ioab, Aysbai, Ithay, with others.

Semei. Come forth thou murderer and wicked man,
The Lord hath brought vpon thy cursed head
The guiltlesse blood of Saule and all his sonnes,
Whose royall throne thy basenesse hath vsurpt,
And to reuenge it deeply on thy soule,
The Lord hath giuen the kingdome to thy sonne,
And he shall wreake the traitrous wrongs of Saule,
Euen as thy sinne hath still importund heauen,
So shall thy murders and adulteric
Be punisht in the sight of Israel,
As thou deseru'st with blood, with death, and hell.

Hence murderer, hence, he threw at him.

Abis. Why doth his dead dog curse my lord the King,
Let me alone to take away his head.

Da. Why medleth thus the son of Zerua
To interrupt the action of our God?
Semei vseth me with this reproch,
Because the Lord hath sent him to reprove
The sinnes of Dauid, printed in his browes,
With blood that blusseth for his conscience guilt,
Who dares then aske him why he curseth me?

Semei. If then thy conscience tell thee thou hast sinned,
And that thy life is odious to the world,
Command thy followers to shun thy face,
And by thy selfe here make away thy soule,
That I may stand and glorie in thy shame.

Da. I am not desperate Semei like thy selfe,
But trust vnto the couenant of my God,
Founded on mercie with repentance built,
And finish't with the glorie of my soule.

Semei.

David and Bersabe.

Semei. A murtherer, and hope for mercie in thy end
Hate and destruction sit vpon thy browes
To watch the issue of thy damned ghost,
Which with thy latest gaspe theile take and teare,
Hurling in euery paine of hell a peece.
Hence murtherer, thou shame to Israel,
Foule lecher, drunkard, plague to heauen and earth.
He throwes at him.

Ioab. What is it pietie in Dauids thoughts,
So to abhorre from lawes of pollicie
In this extremitie of his distresse,
To giue his subiects cause of carelesnesse,
Send hence the dog with sorrow to his graue.

David. Why should the sons of Zerua seeke to checke
His spirit which the Lord hath thus inspir'd:
Behold my sonne which issued from my flesh,
With equall furie seekes to take my life.
How much more then the sonne of Iemini,
Cheefely since he doth nought but Gods command,
It may be he will looke on me this day
With gracious eyes, and for his cursing blesse,
The heart of David in his bitternesse.

Semei. What doest thou fret my soule with sufferance?
O that the soules of Isboseth and Abner,
Which thou sentst swimming to their graues in bloud,
With wounds fresh bleeding, gasping for reuenge,
Were here to execute my burning hate:
But I will hunt thy foot with curses still,
Hence Monster, Murtherer, Mirror of Contempr.
He throwes dust againe.

Enter Ahimaas and Ionathan.

Ahim. Long life to David, to his enemies death.

Da. Welcome Ahimaas and Ionathan,
What newes sends Cusay to thy lord the King.

Ahim. Cusay would wish my lord the King,

Dauid and Bethsabe.

To passe the riuer Iordane presently,
Least he and all his people perish here.
For wise Achitophel hath counsel'd Absalon
To take aduantage of your wearie armes,
And come this night vpon you in the fields.
But yet the Lord hath made his counsell skorne,
And Cusaies pollicie with praise preferd,
Which was to number euery Israelite,
And so assault you in their pride of strength.

Jonat. Abiathar besides intreats the King
To send his men of warre against his sonne,
And hazard not his person in the field.

Dauid. Thankes to Abiathar, and to you both,
And to my Cusay, whom the Lord requite,
But tenne times treble thankes to his soft hand,
Whose pleasant touch hath made my heart to dance,
And play him praises in my zealous breast,
That turnd the counsell of Achitophel
After the praiers of his seruants lips.
Now will we passe the riuer all this night,
And in the morning sound the voice of warre,
The voice of bloudie and vnkindly warre.

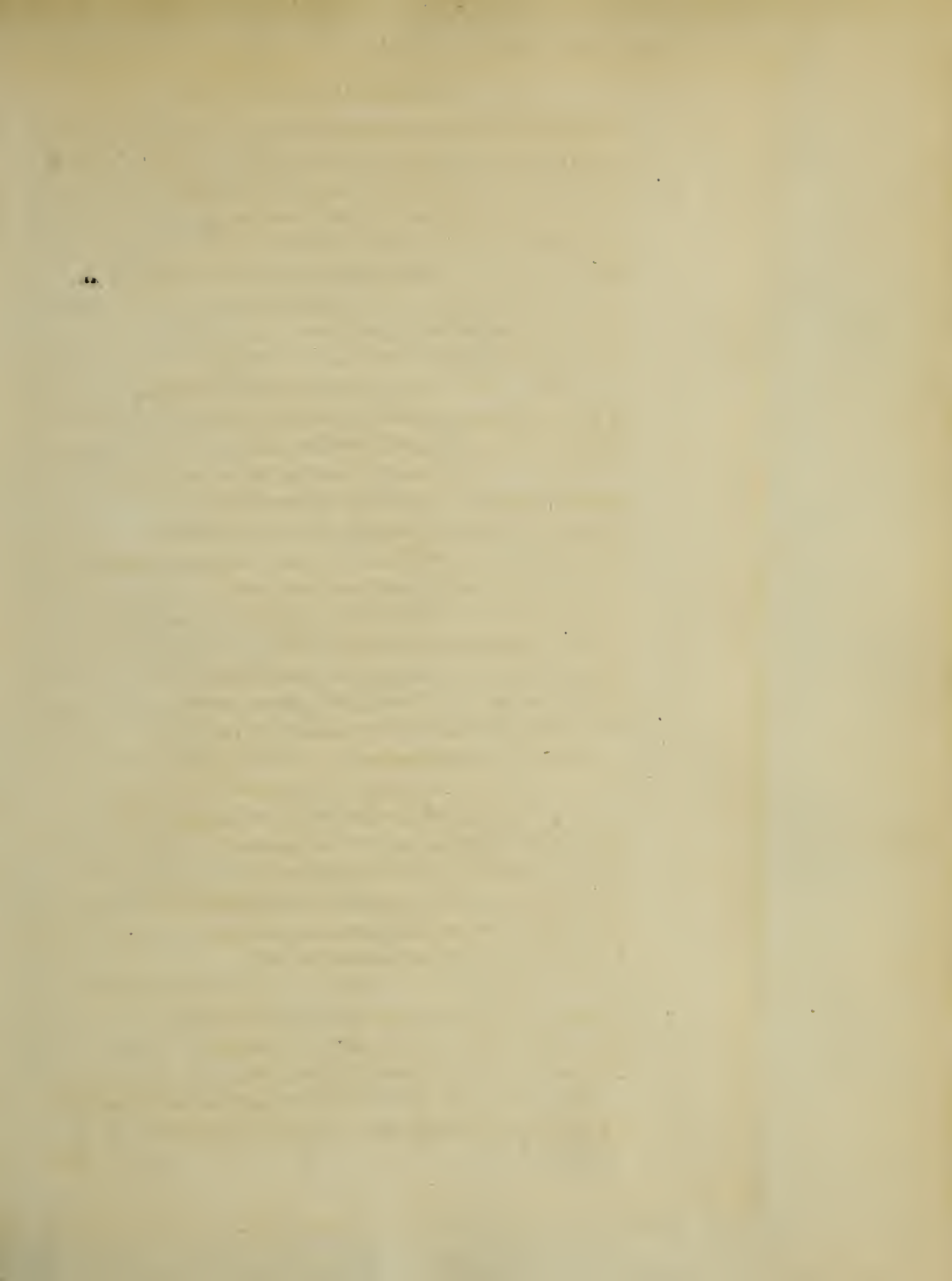
Ioab. Then tell vs how thou wilt deuide thy men,
And who shall haue the speciall charge herein.

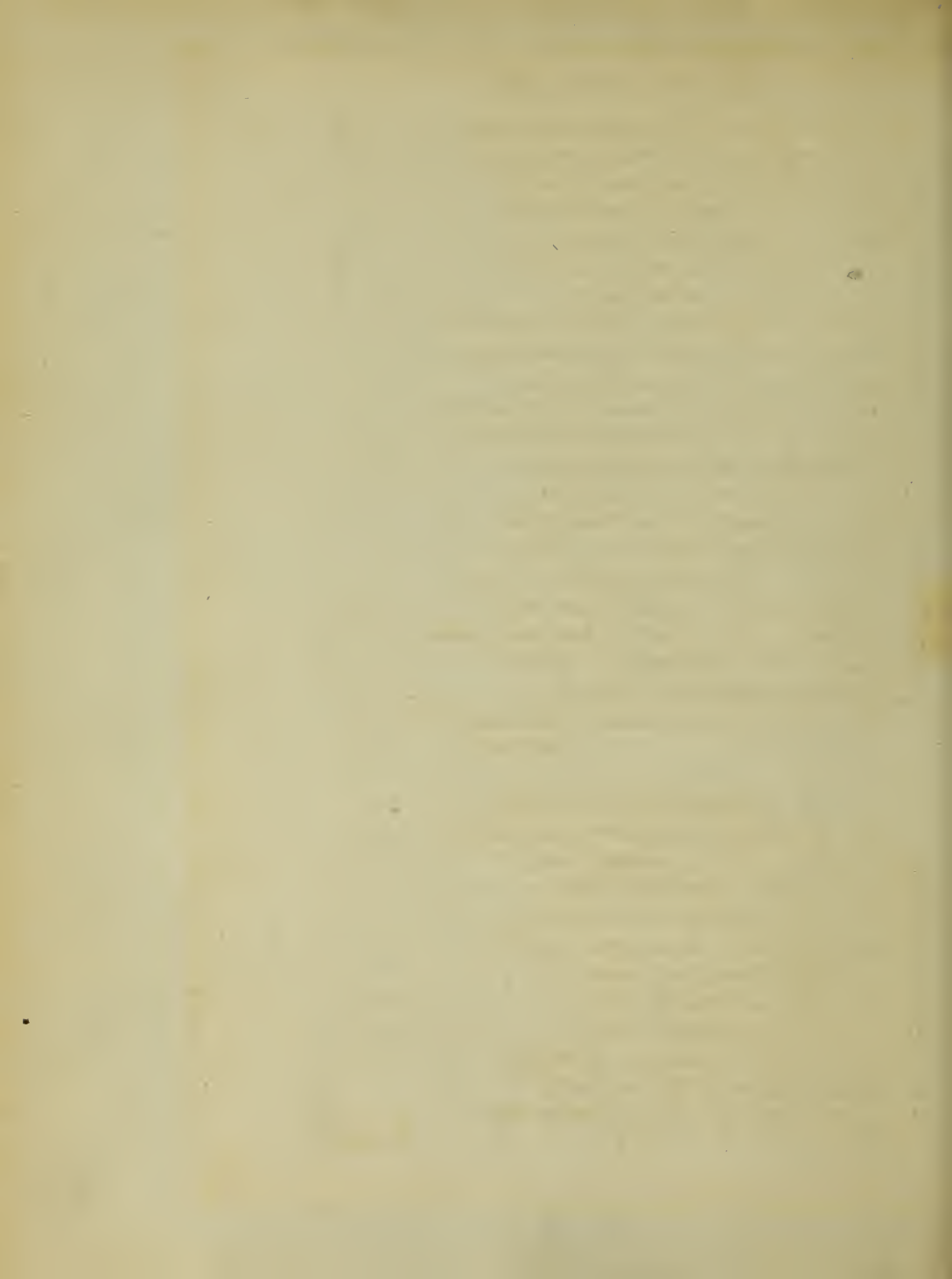
Dauid. Ioab, thy selfe shall for thy charge conduct,
The first third part of all my valiant men,
The second shall Abisaies valour lead,
The third faire Ithay, which I most should grace,
For comfort he hath done to Dauids woes,
And I my selfe will follow in the midst.

Ith. That let not Dauid, for though we should flie,
Tenne thousand of vs were not halfe so much
Esteem'd with Dauids enemies, as himselfe,
Thy people louing thee, denie thee this.

Dauid. What seemes them best, then that will Dauid doe,
But now my lords and captaines hear his voice.

That





David and Bethsabe.

That neuer yet pierst pittious heauen in vaine,
Then let it not slip lightly through your eares,
For my sake spare the young man Absalon.
Ioab thy selfe didst once vse friendly words
To reconcile my heart incenst to him,
If then thy loue be to thy kinsman found,
And thou wilt proue a perfit Israelite,
Friend him with deeds, and touch no haire of him,
Not that fair haire with which the wanton winds
Delight to play, and loues to make it curle,
Wherein the Nightingales would build their nests,
And make sweet bowers in euery golden tresse,
To sing their louer euery night asleepe.
O spoile not Ioab, Ioues faire ornaments,
Which he hath sent to solace Dauids soule.
The best ye see (my lords) are swift to sinne,
To sinne our feet are washt with milke of Roes,
And dried againe with coales of lightening.
O Lord thou seest the prowdest sinnes, poore slaue,
And with his bridle, pulst him to the graue,
For my sake then spare louely Absalon.

Ith. Wee will my lord for thy sake fauour him.

Exeunt.

Achitophel solus with a halter.

Achi. Now hath Achitophel orderd his house,
And taken leaue of euery pleasure there,
Hereon depends Achitophels delights,
And in this circle must his life be closde.
The wife Achitophel, whose counsell proud
Euer as sound for fortunate successe,
As if men askt the Oracle of God,
Is now vsde like the foole of Israel,
Then set thy angrie soule vpon her wings,
And let her flie into the shade of death,
And for my death, let heauen for euer weepe,

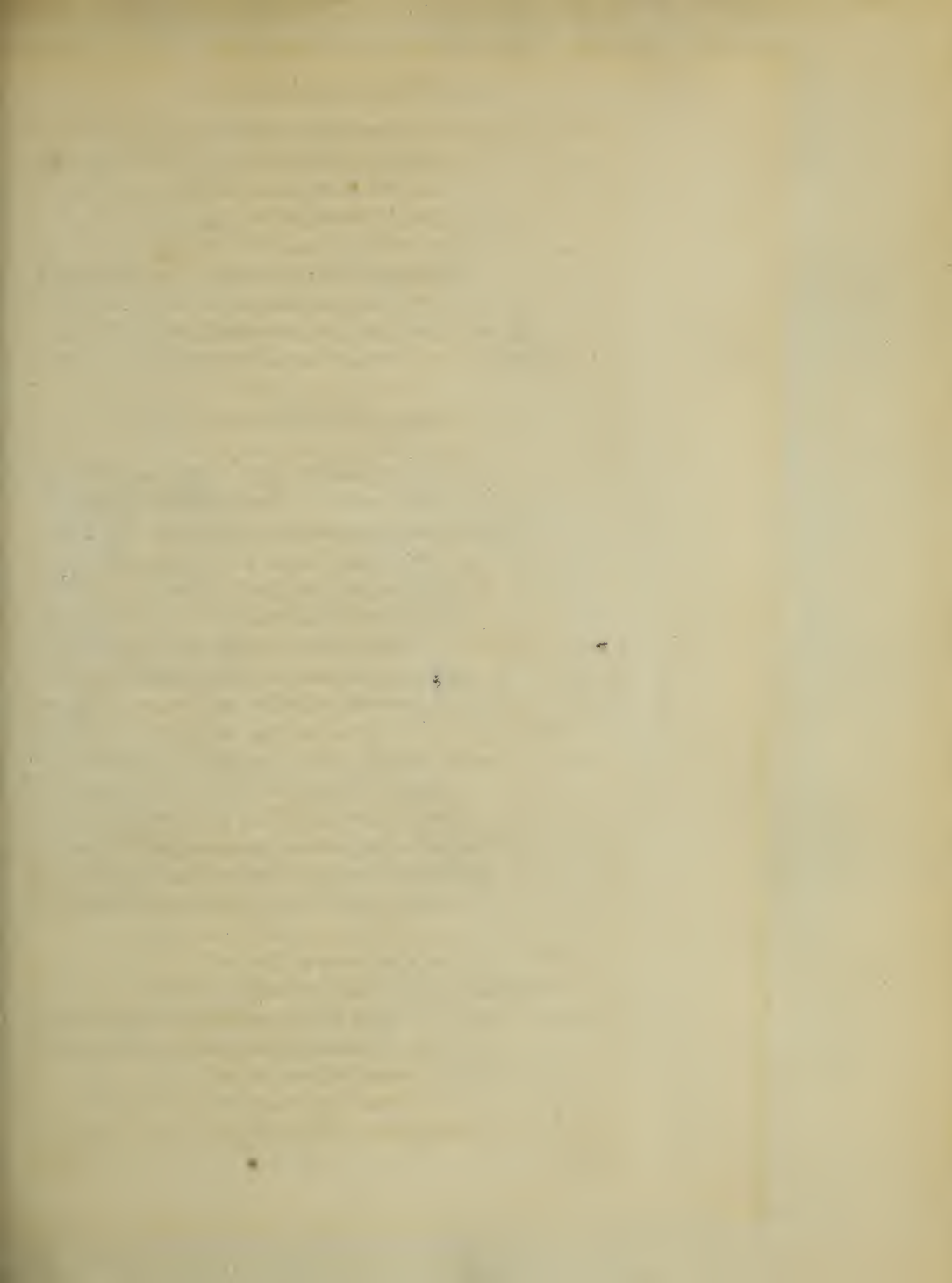
Dauid and Bersabe.

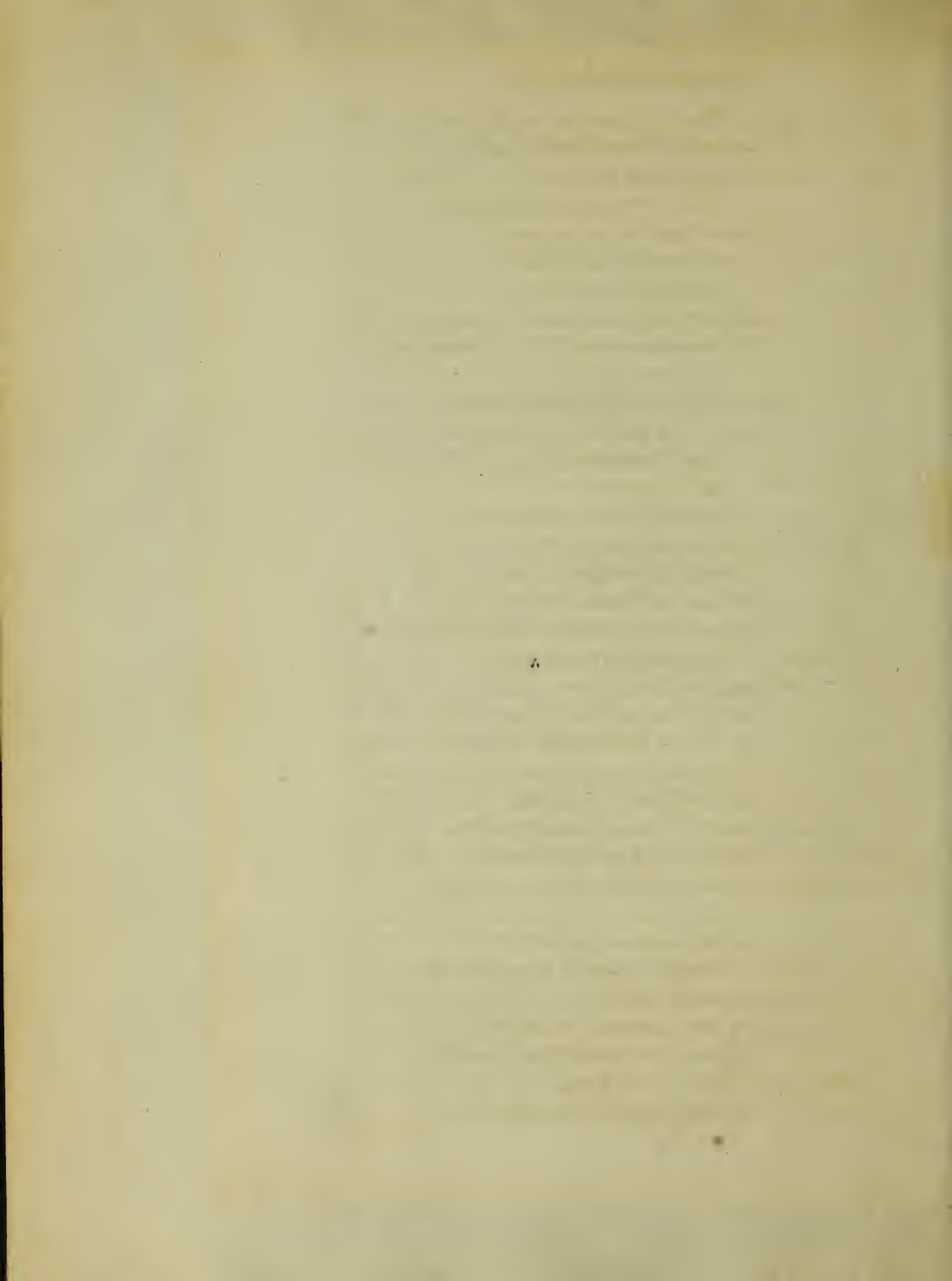
Making huge fouds vpon the land I leaue,
To rauish them, and all their fairest fruits.
Let all the sighs I breath'd for this disgrace,
Hang on my hedges like eternall mists,
As mourning garments for their maisters death.
Ope earth, and take thy miserable sonne
Into the bowels of thy curfed wombe,
Once in a surfet thou diddest spue him forth,
Now for fell hunger sucke him in againe,
And be his bodie poyson to thy vaines,
And now thou hellish instrument of heauen,
Oace execute tharrest of Ioues iust doome,
And stop his breast that curseth Israel. *Exit.*

Absalon, Amasa, with all his traine.

Abs. Now for the crowne and throne of Israel,
To be confirm'd with vertue of my sword,
And writ with Dauids blood vpon the blade,
Now Ioue let forth the golden firmament,
And looke on him with all thy fierie eyes,
Which thou hast made to giue their glories light,
To shew thou louest the vertue of thy hand,
Let fall a wreath of starres vpon my head,
Whose influence may gouerne Israel,
With state exceeding all her other Kings.
Fight lords and captaines, that your soueraignes face
May shine in honour brighter then the sunne,
And with the vertue of my beantious raies,
Make this faire land as fruitfull as the fields,
That with sweet milke and hony ouerflowd.
God in the whissing of a pleasant wind,
Shall march vpon the tops of Mulberie trees,
To coole all breasts that burne with any greeses,
As whylome he was good to Moyces men.
By day the Lord shall sit within a cloud,
To guide your footsteps to the fields of ioy,

And





David and Bersabe.

And in the night a pillar bright as fire
Shall goe before you like a second sunne,
Wherein the essence of his godhead is,
That day and night you may be brought to peace,
And neuer swarue from that delightfome path,
That leads your soules to perfect happinesse.
This shall he doe for ioy when I am King:
Then fight braue captaines that these ioies may flie
Into your bosomes with sweet victorie. *Exeunt.*

The battell, and Absalon hangs by the haire.

What angrie angel sitting in these shades,
Hath laid his cruell hands vpon my haire,
And holds my body thus twixt heauen and earth?
Hath Absalon no souldier neere his hand,
That may vntwine me this vnpleasant curle,
Or wound this tree that rauisheth his lord?
O God behold the glorie of thy hand,
And choifest fruit of Natures workemanship,
Hang like a rotten branch vpon this tree,
Fit for the axe, and ready for the fire.
Since thou withholdst all ordinarie helpe
To lose my bodie from this bond of death,
O let my beautie fill these sencelesse plants,
With sence and power to lose me from this plague,
And worke some wonder to preuent his death,
Whose life thou madst a speciall miracle.

Ioab with another souldier.

Sould. My lord I saw the young prince Absalon
Hang by the haire vpon a shadie oke,
And could by no meanes get himsele vnlofde,

Ioab. Why slewest thou not the wicked Absalon,
That rebell to his father and to heauen,
That so I might haue given thee for thy paines

David and Bethsabe.

Tenne silver sickles, and a golden waft.

Sould. Not for a thousand sickles would I slay
The sonne of Dauid, whom his father chargd,
Nor thou Abisay, nor the sonne of Gath,
Should touch with stroke of deadly violence.
The charge was giuen in hearing of vs all,
And had I done it, then I know thy selfe,
Before thou wouldst abide the Kings rebuke,
Wouldst haue accus'd me as a man of death.

Ioab. I must not now stand trifling here with thee.

Abf. Helpe Ioab, helpe, O helpe thy Absalon,
Let not thy angrie thoughts be laid in bloud,
In bloud of him, that sometimes nourisht thee,
And softned thy sweet heart with friendly loue,
O giue me once againe my fathers sight,
My deereft father, and my princely soueraigne,
That shedding teares of bloud before his face,
The ground may witnesse, and the heauens record,
My last submission sound and full of ruth.

Ioab. Rebell to nature, hate to heauen and earth,
Shall I giue helpe to him, that thirsts the soule
Of his deere father, and my soueraigne lord?
Now see the Lord hath tangled in a tree
The health and glorie of thy stubborne heart,
And made thy pride curbd with a sencelesse plant,
Now Absalon how doth the Lord regard
The beautie where vpon thy hope was built,
And which thou thoughtst his grace did glorie in?
Findst thou not now with feare of instant death,
That God affects not any painted shape,
Or goodly personage, when the vertuous soule
Is stufte with naught but pride and stubbornnesse?
But preach I to thee, while I should reuenge
Thy cursed sinne that staineth Israel,
And makes her fields blush with her childrens bloud?
Take that as part of thy deserued plague,

Which

Dauid and Bethsabe.

Which worthily no torment can inflict.

Abs. O Ioab, Ioab, cruell ruthlesse Ioab,
Herewith thou woundst thy Kingly soueraignes heart,
Whose heauenly temper hates his childrens bloud,
And will be sicke I know for Absalon.
O my deere father, that thy melting eyes
Might pierce this thicket to behold thy sonne,
Thy deereft sonne gor'de with a mortall dart:
Yet Ioab pittie me, pittie my father, Ioab,
Pittie his soules distresse that mournes my life,
And will be dead I know to heare my death.

Ioab. If he were so remorsefull of thy state,
Why sent he me against thee with the sword?
All Ioab meanes to pleasure thee withall,
Is to dispatch thee quickly of thy paine,
Hold Absalon, Ioabs pittie is in this,
In this prowde Absalon is Ioabs loue.

He goes out.

Abs. Such loue, such pittie Israels God send thee,
And for his loue to Dauid pittie me,
Ah my deere father, see thy bowels bleed,
See death assault thy deereft Absalon,
See, pittie, pardon, pray for Absalon:

Enter five or sixe souldiors.

See where the rebell in his glorie hangs,
Where is the vertue of thy beautie Absalon,
Will any of vs here now feare thy lookes?
Or be in loue with that thy golden haire,
Wherein was wrapt rebellion gainst thy fire,
And cords prepar'd to stop thy fathers breath?
Our captaine Ioab hath begun to vs,
And heres an end to thee, and all thy sinnes.
Come let vs take the beauteous rebell downe,
And in some ditch amidst this darke some wood,
Burie his bulke beneath a heape of stones,
Whose stonie heart did hunt his fathers death.

Enter

David and Berſabe.

Enter in triumph with drum and enſigne, Iob, Abyſai,
and ſouldiers to Abſalon.

Iob. Well done tall ſouldiers take the Traitor downe,
And in this myerieditch interre his bones,
Couering his hatefull breſt with hoapes of ſtones,
This ſhadie thicket of darke Ephrami
Shall euer lower on his curſed graue.
Night Rauens and Owles ſhall ring his ſatall knell,
And ſit exclaiming on his damned ſoule,
There ſhall they heape their preyes of Carrion,
Till all his graue be clad with ſtinking bones,
That it may loth the ſence of euery man,
So ſhall his end breed horror to his name,
And to his traitrous fact eternall ſhame. *Exit.*

ſ. Chorus.

Oh dreadfull preſident of his iuſt doome,
Whoſe holy heart is neuer toucht with ruth
Of ſickle beautie, or of glorious ſhapes,
Bur with the vertue of an vpright ſoule,
Humble and zealous in his inward thoughts,
Though in his perſon loathſome and deform'd.
Now ſince this ſtorie lends vs other ſtore,
To make a third diſcourſe of Dauids life,
Adding thereto his moſt renowned death,
And all their deaths, that at his death he iudgd,
Here end we this, and what here wants to pleaſe,
We will ſupplie with treble willingneſſe.

Enter with three or foure of his ſouldiers or gentlemen.

ſ. Iob. What ſay you Abſalon, what ſay you Abſalon,
Sighing I ſay what becomes to Abſalon,
To haue diſcloſed a more worthy wombe

Then

Dauid and Bethsabe.

*Trumpets sound, enter Ioab, Ahimaas, Cushay,
Amasa, with all the rest.*

Ioab. Souldiers of Israel, and ye sonnes of Iuda,
That haue contended in these irkesome broiles;
And ript old Israels bowels with your swords:
The godlesse generall of your stubborne armes
Is brought by Israels helper to the graue:
A graue of shame, and skorne of all the Tribes,
Now then to saue your honours from the dust,
And keepe your blouds in temper by your bones,
Let Ioaes ensigne shroud your manly heads,
Direct your eies, your weapons, and your hearts
To guard the life of Dauid from his foes.
Error hath maskt your much too forward minds,
And you haue sinned against the chosen state,
Against his life, for whom your liues are blest,
And followed an vsurper to the field,
In whose iust death your deaths are threatened,
But Ioab pitties your disordered soules,
And therefore offers pardon, peace, and loue,
To all that will be friendly reconcil'de
To Israels weale, to Dauid, and to heauen.
Amasa, thou art leader of the host,
That vnder Absalon haue rais'de their armes:
Then be a captaine wise and pollicicke,
Carefull and louing for thy souldiers liues,
And lead them to this honourable league.

Amasa. I will, at least Ile doe my best,
And for the gracious offer thou hast made,
I giue thee thanks as much as for my head,
Then you decei'd poore soules of Israel,
Since now ye see the errors you incurd,
With thanks and due submission be appeas'de,
And as ye see your captaines president

David and Berſabe.

Here caſt we then our ſwords at Iobas feet,
Submitting with all zeale and reuerence
Our goods and bodies to his gracious hands.

All ſtand vp.

Ioab. Stand vp and take ye all your ſwords againe,
Dauid and Iob ſhall be bleit herein.

Ahim. Now let me go enforme my lord the King,
How God hath freed him from his enemies.

Ioab. Another time Ahimaas, not now,
But Cuſay goe thy ſelfe, and tell the King
The happie meſſage of our good ſucceſſe.

Cuſ. I will my lord, and thanke thee for thy grace.

Exit Cuſay.

Ahim. What if thy ſeruant ſhould goe to my lord ?

Ioab. What newes haſt thou to bring ſince he is gone ?

Ahim. Yet doe Ahimaas ſo much content,
That he may run about ſo ſweet a charge.

Exit.

Ioab. Run if thou wilt, and peace be with thy ſteps :
Now follow, that you may ſalute the King
With humble hearts and reconciled ſoules.

Ama. We follow Iob to our gracious King,
And him our ſwords ſhall honour to our deaths.

Exeunt.

*Dauid, Berſabe, Salomon, Nathan, Adonia, Chileab,
with their traine.*

Beth. What meanes my lord, the lampe of Iſrael,
From whoſe bright eyes all eyes receiue their light,
To dim the glory of his ſweet aſpects,
And paint his countenance with his hearts diſtreſſe ?
Why ſhould his thoughts retaine a ſad conceit,
When euery pleaſure kneeles before his throne,
And ſues for ſweet acceptance with his grace,
Take but your Lute, and make the mountaines dance,
Retriue the ſunnes ſphere, and reſtraine the clouds,

Giue

Dauid and Bersabe.

Giue eares to trees, make sauage Lyons tame,
Impose still silence to the loudest winds,
And fill the fairest day with foulest stormes,
Then why should passions of much meaner power,
Beare head against the heart of Israel.

Da. Faire Bersabe, thou mightst increase the strength,
Of these thy arguments, drawne from my skill,
By vrging thy sweet sight to my conceits,
Whose vertue euer seru'd for sacred baulme
To cheere my pinings past all earthly ioies,
But Bethsabe, the daughter of the highest,
Whose beautie builds the towers of Israel,
Shee that in chaines of pearle and vnicorne,
Leads at her traine the ancient golden world,
The world that Adam held in Paradise,
Whose breath refineth all infectious aires,
And makes the meddowes smile at her repaire.
Shee, Shee, my dearest Bethsabe,
Faire peace, the goddesse of our graces here,
Is fled the streets of faire Ierusalem,
The fields of Israel, and the heart of Dauid,
Leading my comforts in her golden chaines,
Linckt to the life and soule of Absalon.

Beth. Then is the pleasure of my soueraignes heart,
So wrapt within the bosome of that sonne,
That Salomon, whom Israels God affects,
And gaue the name vnto him for his loue,
Should be no salue to comfort Dauids soule?

Dauid. Salomon (my loue) is Dauids lord,
Our God hath nam'd him lord of Israel:
In him (for that, and since he is thy sonne)
Must Dauid needs be pleased at the heart,
And he shall surely sit vpon my throne:
But Absalon the beautie of my bones,
Faire Absalon the counterfeit of loue,
Sweet Absalon, the image of content,

David and Bethsabe.

Must claime a portion in his fathers care,
And be in life and death King Dauids sonne.

Nat. Yet as my lord hath said, let Salomon raigne,
Whom God in naming hath annointed King.
Now is he apt to learne th' eternall lawes,
Whose knowledge being roored in his youth,
Will beautifie his age with glorious fruits,
While Absalon incenst with gracelesse pride,
Vsurpes and staines the kingdome with his sinne,
Let Salomon be made thy staffe of age,
Faire Israels reit, and honour of thy race.

Da. Tell me my Salomon, wilt thou embrace
Thy fathers precepts graued in thy heart,
And satisfie my zeale to thy renouie,
With practise of such sacred principles
As shall concerne the state of Israel?

Sal. My royall father, if the heavenly zeale
Which for my welfare seeds vpon your soule,
Were not sustained with vertue of mine owne,
If the sweet accents of your cheerefull voice
Should not each hower beat vpon mine eares
As sweetly as the breath of heauen to him
That gaspeth scorched with the Summers sunne,
I should be guiltie of vnpardoned sinne,
Fearing the plague of heauen, and shame of earth:
But since I vow my selfe to learne the skill
And holy secrets of his mightie hand
Whose cunning tunes the musicke of my soule,
It would content me (father) first to learne
How th' eternall fram'd the firmament,
Which bodies lead their influence by fire?
And which are fill'd with hoarie Winters yse?
What signe is raignie, and what starre is faire?
Why by the rules of true proportion
The yeare is still diuided into months,
The months to daies, the daies to certaine howers?

What

Dauid and Bethsabe.

What fruitfull race shall fill the future world ?
Or for what time shall this round building stand ?
What Magistrates, what Kings shall keepe in awe
Mens minds with bridles of th' eternall law ?

Da. Wade not too farre my boy in waues too deepe,
The feeble eyes of our aspiring thoughts
Behold things present, and record things past :
But things to come, exceed our humane reach,
And are not painted yet in angels eyes :
For those, submit thy sence, and say, Thou power
That now art framing of the future world,
Knowest all to come, not by the course of heauen,
By fraile coniectures of inferiour signes,
By monstrous fouds, by flights and flockes of birds,
By bowels of a sacrificed beast,
Or by the figures of some hidden art :
But by a true and naturall presage,
Laying the ground and perfect architect
Of all our actions now before thine eyes,
From Adam to the end of Adams seed.
O heauen protect my weaknesse with thy strength,
So looke on me that I may view thy face,
And see these secrets written in thy browes.
O sun come dart thy raies vpon my moone,
That now mine eyes eclipsed to the earth,
May brightly be refin'd and shine to heauen.
Transforme me from this flesh, that I may liue
Before my death, regenerate with thee.
O thou great God, rauish my earthly sprite,
That for the time a more then humane skill
May feed the Organons of all my sence,
That when I thinke, thy thoughts may be my guide,
And when I speake, I may be made by choice
The perfect eccho of thy heauenly voice.
Thus say my sonne, and thou shalt learne them all.

Sals. A secret fury rauisheth my soule,

David and Berſabe.

Lifting my mind aboue her humane bounds,
And as the Eagle roused from her stand,
With violent hunger (towing in the aire)
Seafeth her feathered prey, and thinkes to feed,
But seeing then a cloud beneath her feet,
Lets fall the foule, and is emboldened
With eies intentiue to bedare the sun,
And ſtieth close vnto his ſtately ſphere:
So Salomon mounted on the burning wings
Of zeale deuine, lets fall his mortall food,
And cheeres his ſences with celeftiall aire,
Treads in the golden ſtarrie Labyrinth,
And holds his eyes fixt on Iehouaes browes,
Good father teach me further what to doe.

Nath. See David how his haughtie ſpirit mounts
Euen now of heighth to wield a diademe,
Then make him promiſe, that he may ſucceed,
And reſt old Iſraels bones from broiles of warre.

David. Nathan thou Prophet, ſprung from Ieſſes root,
I promiſe thee, and louely Bethſabe,
My Salomon ſhall gouerne after me.

Beth. He that hath toucht thee with this righteous thought
Preferue the harbour of thy thoughts in peace.

Enter Meſſ.

Meſſ. My lord, thy ſeruants of the watch haue ſene
One running hither ward from forth the warres.

David. If hee bee come alone, he bringeth newes.

Meſſ. Another hath thy ſervant ſene my lord,
Whoſe running much reſembles Sadocs ſonne.

Da. He is a good man, and good tidings brings.

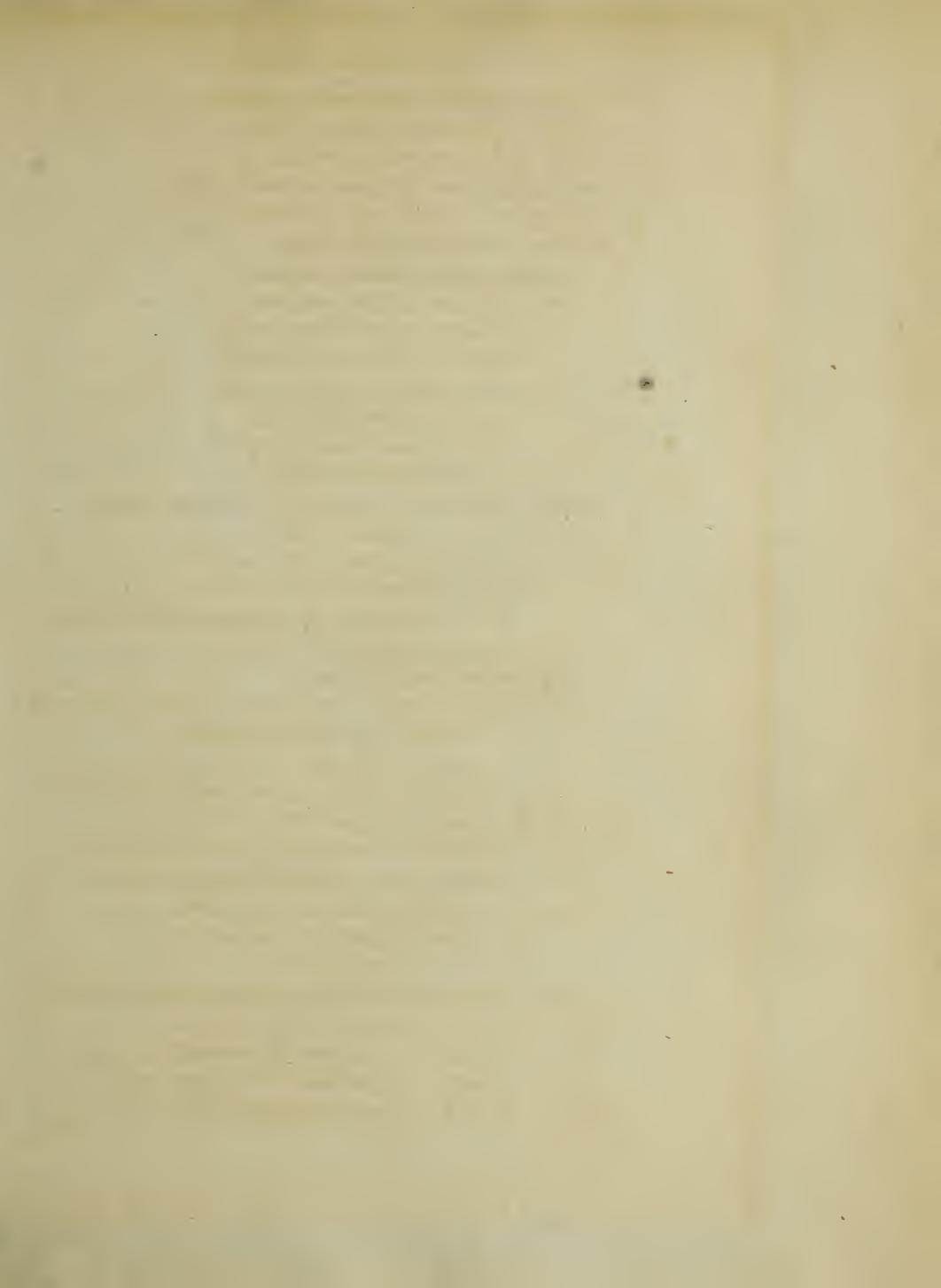
Enter Ahimaas.

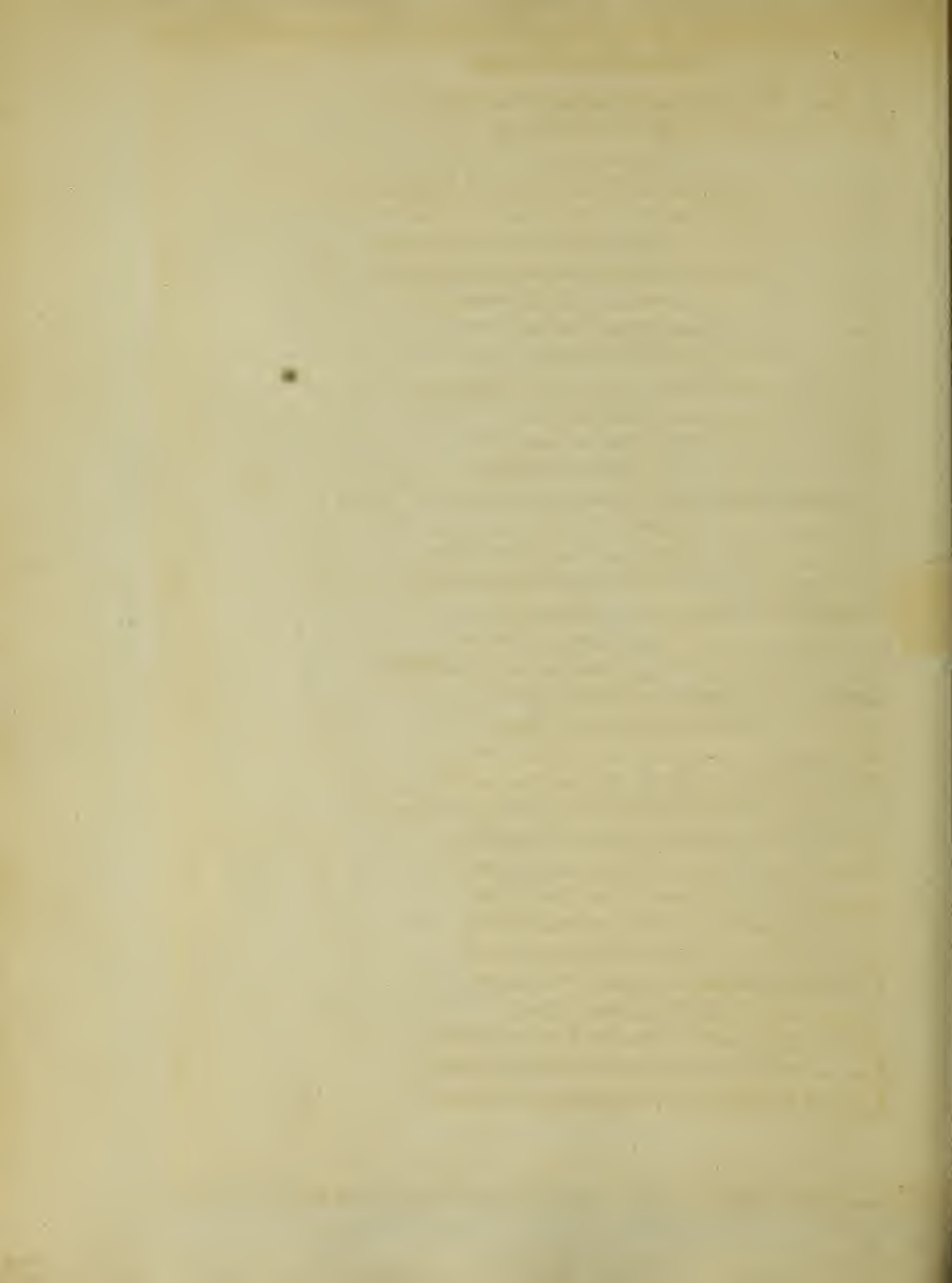
Ahim. Peace and content be with my lord the King,
Whom Iſraels God hath bleſt with victory.

Da. Tell me Ahimaas, liues my Abſalon?

Ahim. I ſaw a troupe of ſouldiours gathered,
But know not what the tumult might import.

David.





David and Bersabe.

Dauid. Stand by, vntill some other may informe
The heart of Dauid with a happie truth.

Enter Cusay.

Cusay. Happinesse and honour liue with Dauids soule,
Whom God hath blest with conquest of his foes.

Dauid. But Cusay liues the yong man Absalon?

Cus. The stubborne enemies to Dauids peace,
And all that cast their darts against his crowne,
Fare euer like the young man Absalon,
For as he rid the woods of Ephraim
(Which fought for thee as much as all thy men)
His haire was tangled in a shadie oake,
And hanging there (by Ioab and his men)
Sustained the stroke of well deserued death.

Dauid. Hath Absalon sustained the stroke of death?
Die Dauid for the death of Absalon,
And make these cursed newes the bloudy darts,
That through his bowels rip thy wretched breast.
Hence Dauid, walke the solitarie woods,
And in some Cedars shade (the thunder slew,
And fire from heauen hath made his branches blacke)
Sit mourning the decease of Absalon,
Against the body of that blasted plant
In thousand shiuers breake thy yuorie Lute,
Hanging thy stringlesse harpe vpon his boughs,
And through the hollow saplesse sounding truncke,
Bellow the torments that perplexe thy soule.
There let the winds sit sighing till they burst,
Let tempest muffled with a cloud of pitch,
Threaten the Forrests with her hellish face,
And (mounted fiercely on her yron wings)
Rend vp the wretched engine by the roots
That held my dearest Absalon to death.
Then let them tesse my broken Lute to heauen,
Euen to his hands that beats me with the strings,
To shew how sadly his poore sheepeheard sings.

David and Bethsabe.

He goes to his pavillion, and sits close a while.

Beth. Die Bethsabe to see thy David mourne,
To heare his tunes of anguish and of hell,
O helpe my David, helpe thy Bethsabe,

She kneeles downe.

Whose heart is pierced with thy breathie swords,
And bursts with burthen of tenne thousand greeses.
Now sits thy sorrowes sucking of my blood,
O that it might be poison to their powers,
And that their lips might draw my bosome drie,
So Davids loue might ease him, though she die.

Nat. These violent passions come not from above,
David and Bethsabe offend the highest,
To mourne in this inmeasurable sort:

Dauid. O Absalon, Absalon, O my sonne, my sonne,
Would God that I had died for Absalon:
But he is dead, ah dead, Absalon is dead,
And David liues to die for Absalon.

He looks forth, and at the end sits close againe.

Enter Ioab, Abisay, Itay, with their traine.

Ioab. Why lies the Queene so prostrate on the ground?
Why is this companie so Tragicke-hew'd?
Why is the King now absent from his men?
And marcheth not in triumph through the gates?

He unfolds the pavillion.

David awake, if sleepe haue shut thine eyes,
Sleepe of affection, that thou canst not see
The honour offerd to the victors head,
Ioab brings conquest pierced on his speare,
And ioy from all the Tribes of Israel.

Dauid. Thou man of blood, thou sepulchre of death,
Whose marble breast intombe my bowels quicke,
Did I not charge thee, nay intreat thy hand,
Euen for my sake to spare my Absalon?
And hast thou now in spight of Davids health,

And



Dauid and Bersabe.

And skorne to doe my heart some happinesse,
Giuen him the sword, and spilt his purple soule?

Ioab. What irkes it Dauid, that he victor breaths,

That Iuda and the fields of Israel,
Should cleanse their faces from their childrens bloud?

What art thou wearie of thy royall rule?

Is Israels throne a Serpent in thine eyes,

And he that set thee there, so farre from thanks,

That thou must curse his seruant for his sake?

Hast thou not said, that as the morning light,

The cloudlesse morning, so should be thine house,

And not as flowers by the brightest raine,

Which growes vp quickly, and as quickly fades?

Hast thou not said, the wicked are as thornes,

That cannot be preserued with the hand,

And that the man shall touch them, must be armd

With coats of yron, and garments made of Steele,

Or with the shaft of a defenced speare?

And art thou angrie he is now cut off,

That lead the guiltlesse swarming to their deaths,

And was more wicked then an host of men?

Aduance thee from thy melancholy denne,

And decke thy bodie with thy blisfull robes,

Or by the Lord that swaies the heauen, I sweare,

Ile lead thine armies to another King,

Shall cheere them for their princely chiuallrie,

And not sit daunted, frowning in the darke,

When his faire lookes, with Oyle and Wine refreshr,

Should dart into their bosomes glad some beames,

And fill their stomackes with triumphant feasts,

That when elsewhere sterne warre shall sound his trumpe,

And call another battaile to the field,

Fame still may bring thy valiant souldiers home,

And for their seruice happily confesse

She wanted worthy trumpes to sound their prowesse,

Take thou this course and liue, refuse, and die.

David and Berſabe.

Abiſay. Come brother, let him ſit there till he ſincke,
Some other ſhall aduance the name of Ioab.

offers to goe out.

Berſ. O ſtay my lords, ſtay, David mournes no more,
But riſeth to giue honour to your acts.

ſtay.

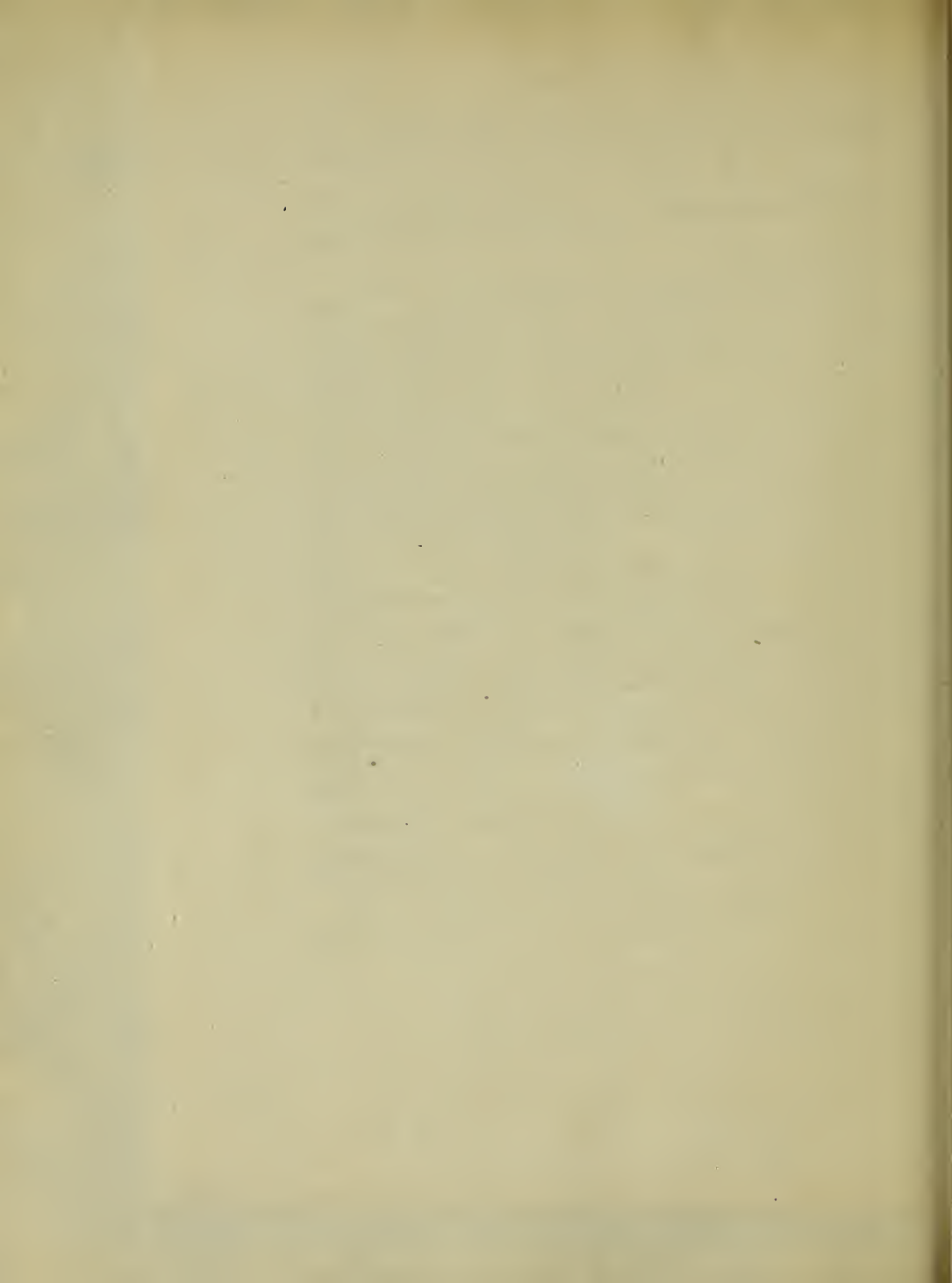
Heriſeth vp.

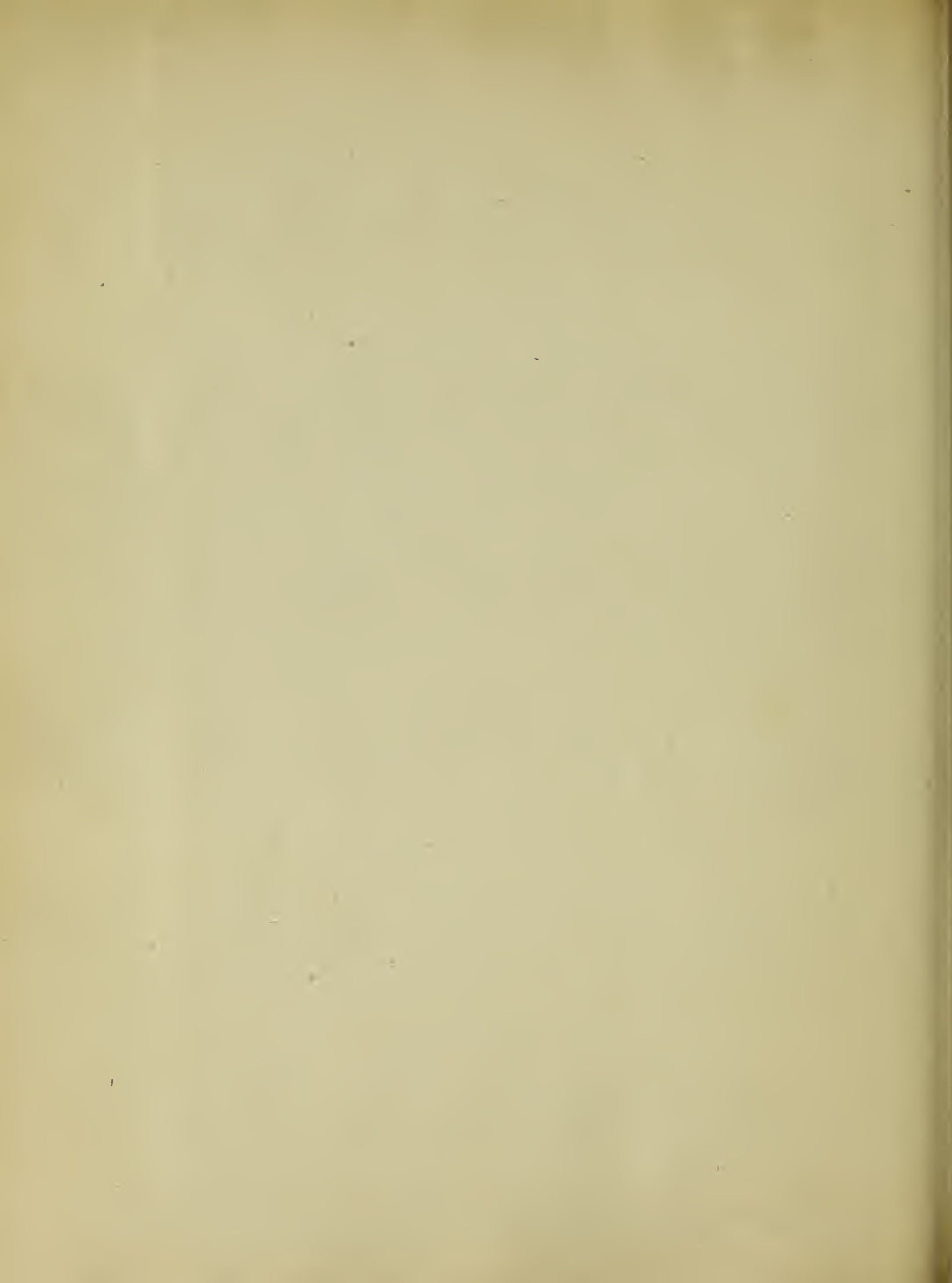
David. Then happie art thou Davids faireſt ſonne,
That freed from the yoke of earthly toiles,
And ſequeſtred from ſence of humane finnes,
Thy ſoule ſhall ioy the ſacred cabinet
Of thoſe deuine Ideas, that preſent
Thy changed ſpirit with a heauen of bliſſe.
Then thou art gone, ah thou art gone my ſonne
To heauen I hope my Abſalon is gone,
Thy ſoule there plac'd in honour of the Saints
Or angels clad with immortalitie,
Shall reape a ſeuenfold grace, for all thy grieſes,
Thy eyes now no more eyes but ſhining ſtars,
Shall decke the flaming heauens with nouell lampes,
There ſhalt thou taſt the drinke of Seraphins,
And cheere thy feelings with archangels food,
Thy day of reſt, thy holy Sabbath day
Shall be eternall, and the curtaine drawne,
Thou ſhalt behold thy ſoueraigne face to face,
With wonder knit in triple vnitie,
Vnitie infinite and innumerable,
Courage braue captaines, Ioabs tale hath ſtir'd,
And made the ſuit of Iſrael preferd.

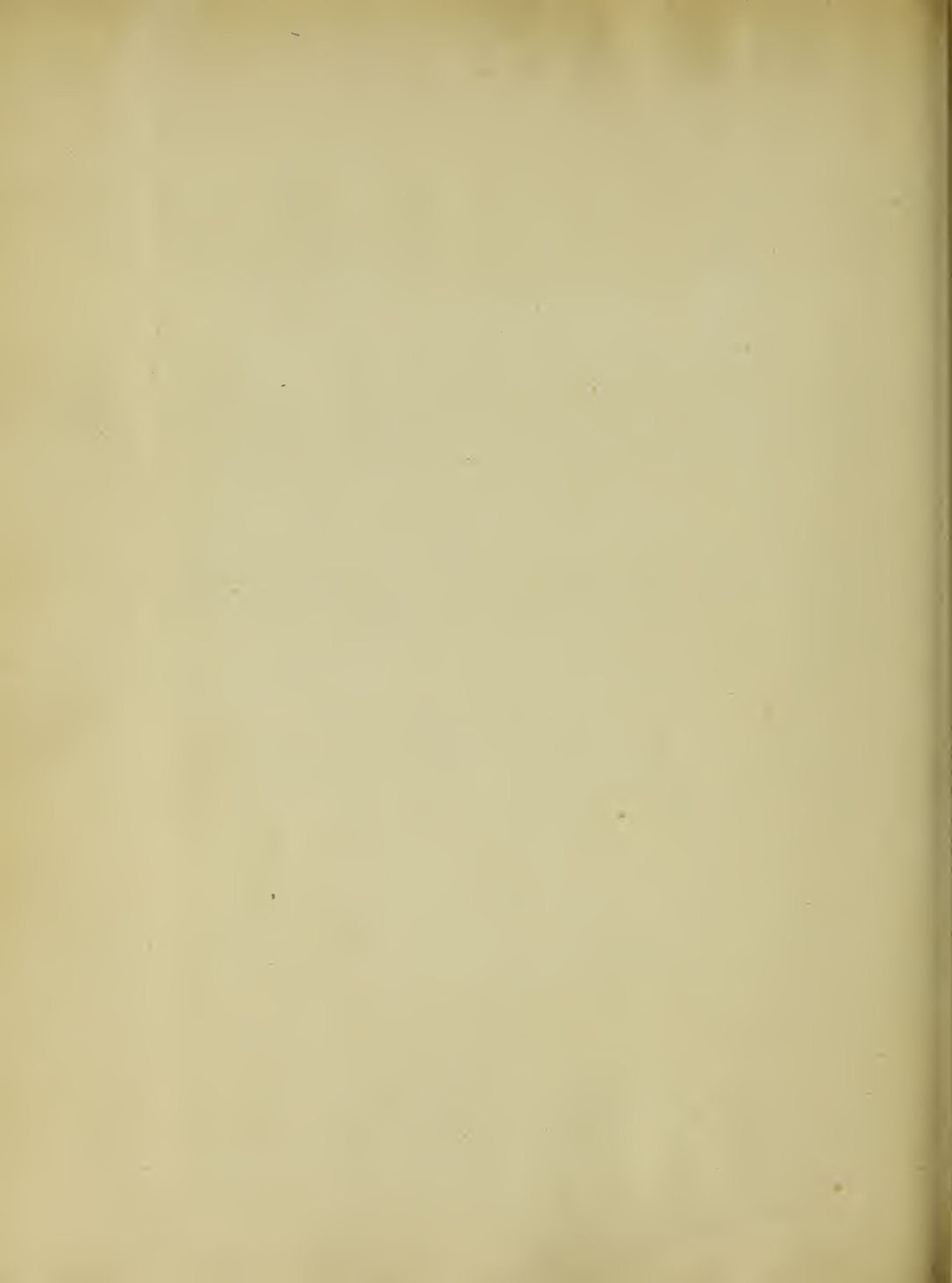
Ioab. Brauely reſolud and ſpoken like a King,
Now may old Iſrael, and his daughters ſing.

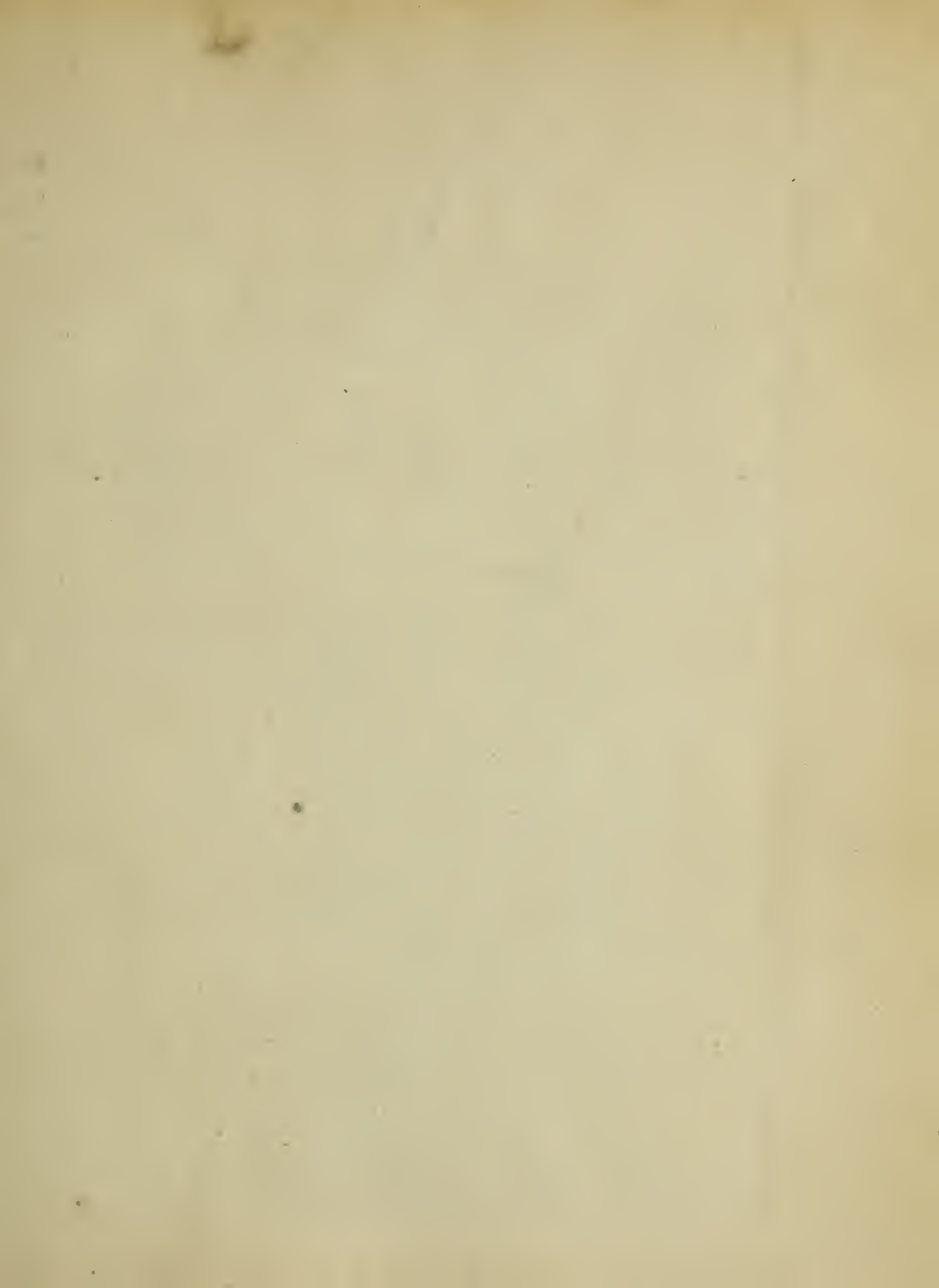
Exeunt.

F I N I S.



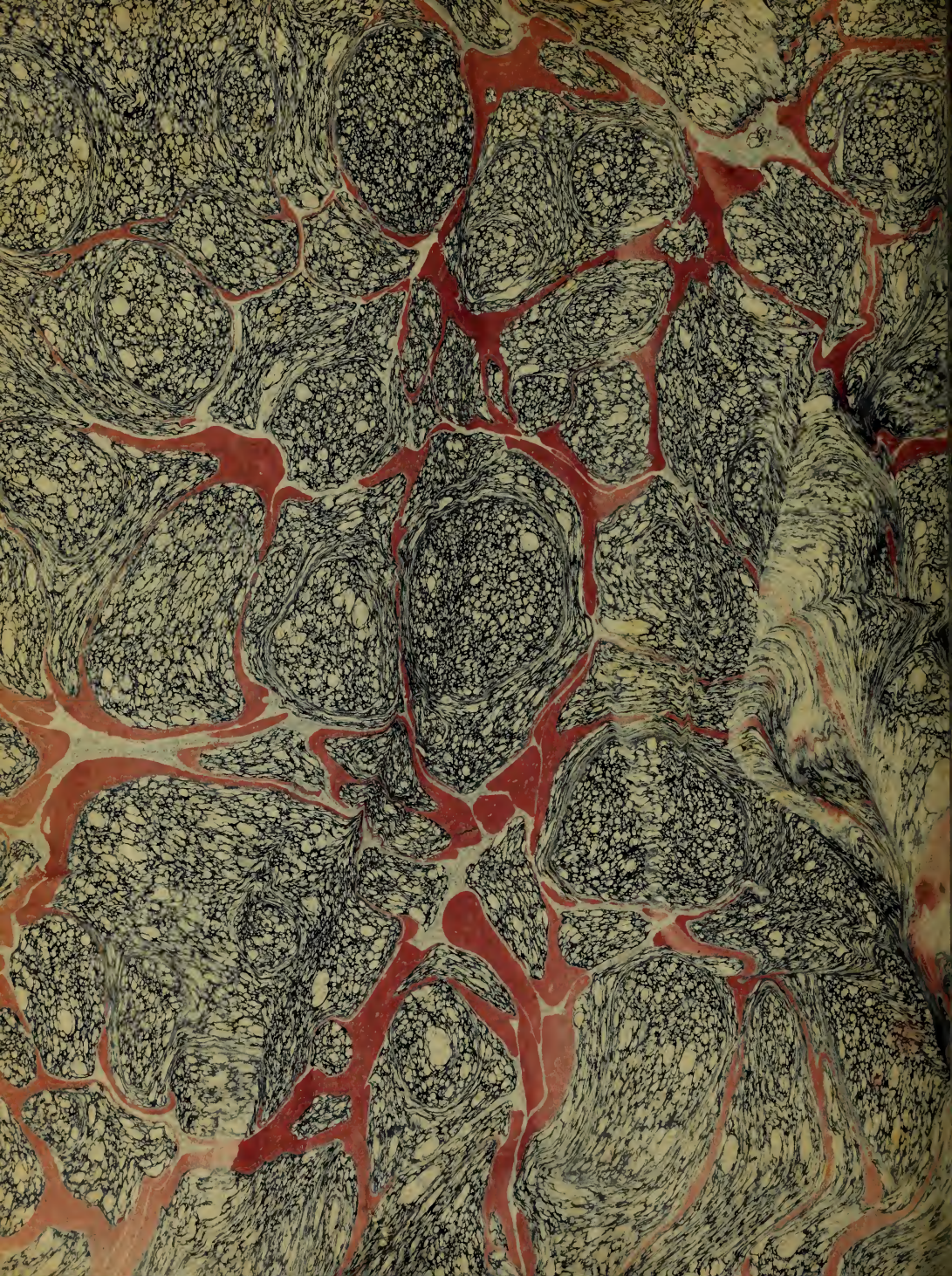












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